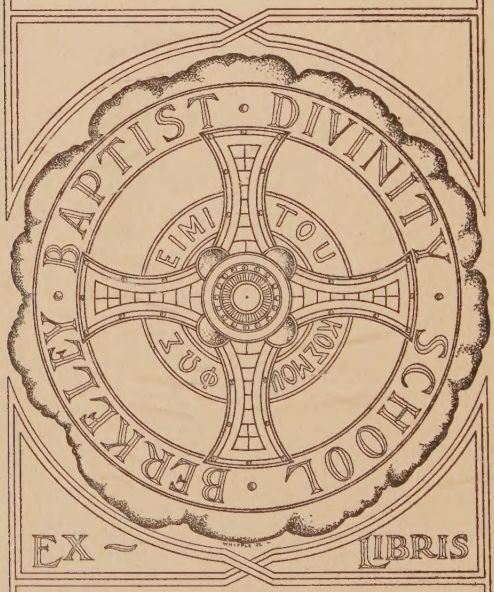
THE
NEW
DISPENSATION

Gift of
J. H. Morison



Accession No. 3007

Date

LIBRARY

J. H. Morison

1884

Robert S. Morison
from his father's library
1899.

THE ORIENTAL CHRIST

BY

P. C. MOZOOMDAR

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL
LIBRARY
WITHDRAWN

Property of
CBBD
Please return to
Graduate Theological Union Library
WITHDRAWN

BOSTON
GEO. H. ELLIS, 141 FRANKLIN STREET
1883

F553
M87
LOWER
LIBRARY

COPYRIGHT,
BY GEORGE H. ELLIS,
1883.

TO

Keshub Chunder Sen,

THE BELOVED COMPANION OF MY EARLY BOYHOOD, THE GUIDE OF MY YOUTH, THE FRIEND AND LEADER, OF MY MANHOOD, TO WHOM MY SOUL HAS CLUNG AMID MANY TRANSITIONS AND TRIALS,

The following pages are inscribed,

WITH THE SERVICE OF SIMPLE AFFECTION, AND FAITHFUL LOYALTY.

3007

CONTENTS

PREFACE, ... 7

INTRODUCTION, ... 15

I. THE BATHING CHRIST, ... 47

II. THE FASTING CHRIST, ... 57

III. THE PRAYING CHRIST, ... 74

IV. THE TEACHING CHRIST, ... 86

V. THE REBUKING CHRIST, ... 98

VI. THE WEEPING CHRIST, ... 111

VII. THE PILGRIMING CHRIST, ... 126

VIII. THE TRUSTING CHRIST, ... 137

IX. THE HEALING CHRIST, ... 146

X. THE FEASTING CHRIST, ... 155

XI. THE PARTING CHRIST, ... 170

XII. THE DYING CHRIST, ... 181

XIII. THE REIGNING CHRIST, ... 188

PREFACE

I HAVE often asked myself what right I have to handle the life of Christ. The answer has been uniform. My spirit craves to utter itself on that endless theme. I anticipate the disapproval of authoritative ecclesiastics. I foresee the surprise of one-sided theists. I have a clear prevision of the sarcasm and reproach of clear-headed combative scholars. But my line of speculation scarcely coincides with theirs. Mine are but human prayerful endeavors to realize the character and spirit of the Son of God. Mine are but attempts to accept, assimilate, and embody ideal humanity. The Bible has been my guide; and devout thinkers, both living and dead, have been my companions. I pretend not to criticise, far less to teach! In my long wanderings and solitudes, in my dark isolations and seasons of spiritual exile, I have labored to seek, and rejoiced to find, pure, simple, glorious manhood in the Son of

Man. And I feel constrained to speak on the subject to the spirit of the living, and the dead, and the unborn. If I stand before the tribunal of the times, it is not as a man assuming superiority, teachership, or wisdom over any, but simply as one uttering aloud his own thoughts.

Nearly twenty years ago, my troubles, studies, and circumstances forced upon me the question of personal relationship to Christ. Though for a short time taught in a government college in Calcutta, where no moral or religious instruction is ever given, and where, on the contrary, a good deal of the opposite influence is directly and indirectly imbibed, I was early awakened to a sense of deep inner unworthiness. Placed in youth by the side of a very pure and powerful character, whose external conditions were similar to my own, I was helped to feel — in the freshness of my susceptibilities, by the law of contrast — that I was painfully imperfect, and needed very much the grace of a saving God. In the Brahmo Somaj, this consciousness of imperfection soon developed into a strong sense of sin. The doctrine of original corruption never preoccupied

my boyhood or youth, the fear of eternal punishment never biassed my thought or aspiration. I was never taught to feel any undue leaning toward the Christian Scriptures, or the Christian religion. Mine was a strong unforced consciousness of natural and acquired unworthiness. Keshub Chunder Sen's early melancholy had, perhaps, an effect on me. No doubt, his severe morality affected and partly moulded my character. The influence of Christian doctrines might perhaps be diffused in the moral atmosphere of the land of my birth. Definite recollection, or conscious analysis does not give me any clue into how or why it was. But this I do very clearly remember that as the sense of sin grew on me, and with it a deep miserable restlessness, a necessity of reconciliation between aspiration and practice, I was mysteriously led to feel a personal affinity to the spirit of Christ. The whole subject of the life and death of Christ had for me a marvellous sweetness and fascination. I repeat, I can never account for this. Untaught by any one, not sympathized with even by the very best of my friends, often discouraged and ridiculed, I persisted

in according to Christ a tenderness of honor which arose in my heart unbidden. I prayed, I fasted at Christmas and Easter times. I secretly hunted the book-shops of Calcutta to gather the so-called likenesses of Christ. I did not know, I cared not to think, whither all this would lead.

About the year 1867, a very painful period of spiritual isolation overtook me. I have repeatedly during such seasons lost the sympathy of friends, and sought my God alone. But one of the severest trials was at the time to which I make allusion. I was almost alone in Calcutta. My inward trials and travails had really reached a crisis. It was a week-day evening, I forget the date now. The gloomy and haunted shades of the summer evening had suddenly thickened into darkness; and all things, both far and near, had assumed an unearthly mysteriousness. I sat near the large lake in the Hindu College compound. Above me rose in a sombre mass the giant, grim, old seesum tree, under the far-spreading foliage of which I have played so often, and my father played before me. A sobbing, gusty wind swam over the water's surface, the ripples sounded on the

grassy bank, the breeze rustled in the highest regions of the great tree. My eyes, nearly closed, were yet dreamily conscious of the gloomy calmness of the scenery. I was meditating on the state of my soul, on the cure of all spiritual wretchedness, the brightness and peace unknown to me, which was the lot of God's children. I prayed and besought heaven. I cried, and shed hot tears. It might be said I was almost in a state of trance. Suddenly, it seemed to me, let me own it was revealed to me, that close to me there was a holier, more blessed, most loving personality upon which I might repose my troubled head. Jesus lay discovered in my heart as a strange, human, kindred love, as a repose, a sympathetic consolation, an unpurchased treasure to which I was freely invited. The response of my nature was unhesitating and immediate. Jesus, from that day, to me became a reality whereon I might lean. It was an impulse then, a flood of light, love, and consolation. It is no longer an impulse now. It is a faith and principle; it is an experience verified by a thousand trials. It was not a bodily Christ then; it is much less a bodily emanation now. A character,

a spirit, a holy, sacrificed, exalted self, whom I recognize as the true Son of God. According to my humble light, I have always tried to be faithful to this inspiration. I have been aided, confirmed, encouraged by many, and most of all by one. My aspiration has been not to speculate on Christ, but to be what Jesus tells us all to be. That labor, I know, will not end in this life; and the goal as well as the prize is elsewhere. But it is still a great privilege and a great reward to be able to say something on what so many look up to with longing and fond aspiration. I can, with perfect truth, declare that it is the grace and activity of the indwelling presence of God alone whereto I am indebted for these experiences. But, such as they are, I set them down.

I shall be content, if what I say in these pages at all tend to give completeness to any man's ideas of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. I have set down these views without any pretension to scholarship. They are but the meditations of a heart which, without any human stimulus or guidance, long ago recognized its personal relationship to the soul and sympathy of Christ. In the midst of these

crumbling systems of Hindu error and superstition, in the midst of this self-righteous dogmatism and acrimonious controversy, in the midst of these cold, spectral, shadows of transition, secularism, and agnostic doubt, to me Christ has been like the meat and drink of my soul. His influences have woven round me for the last twenty years or more, and, outside the fold of Christianity as I am, have formed a new fold, wherein I find many besides myself. I repeat that what I say of Christ is only derived from my own humble experiences, fanned by the guardian spirit of a beloved teacher. And this is my sole justification in venturing to publish anything on the subject. If my sentiments be found to correspond with those of others more advanced in the heavenly kingdom; if they strengthen and help any yet behind on the forward way; if they call forth more thought, higher aspiration, clearer faith, and purer character in any man, I shall consider that as a grace and blessing of God upon this my work of many long and anxious days.

Boston, October, 1883.

INTRODUCTION

THE estimates of character vary, if viewed from different stand-points. Particularly when the singularity of a nature happens to lie in its many-sidedness, representations of it may be conflicting, but quite genuine and correct. It never formed part of the principles of the Brahmo Somaj to maintain that its ideas respecting the life and teachings of great prophets admitted of no correction or improvement. In fact its absolute teachableness on such subjects is its only spiritual peculiarity. The Brahmos have therefore, in a uniform spirit of humility, criticised other men's notions, trusting that, like themselves, their neighbors will not be ashamed to learn from them. The utterances of the Brahmo Somaj of India at different times on the founder of Christianity, and some of its doctrines have created a good deal of agitation in the Christian communities of other countries. A principal point of difference between the Christians and the Brahmos on such matters is this. The latter maintain that the life and teachings of Jesus have been presented by

Christian missionaries through the colored medium of European ideals and European theology, and have therefore failed to attract those spiritual instincts and national sympathies for which the Hindus, as a primitive Eastern race, are distinguished. It is held that the celestial figure of the sweet Prophet of Nazareth is illumined with strange and unknown radiance, when the light of oriental faith and mystic devotion is allowed to fall upon it. It is a fact that the greatest religions of the world have sprung from Asia. It has, with some accuracy, been said, therefore, that it is an Asiatic only who can teach religion to Asiatics. Not that Europeans are of no use here. On the contrary, Christian missionaries, Christian men, and Christian literature, above all, have roused the dormant nature of Eastern people,— pre-eminently of our own people,— suggested inquiries and stimulated thought, the natural results of which show themselves in that religious activity which more or less characterizes every part of India. But the efforts of European agencies, suggestive and helpful as they are, do not go far enough, do not go deep enough, but still float on the surface, and affect the merest externals of human life. It is a national ideal only that can touch the undercurrents of national trust and aspiration. And let us assure our

European friends that, in religion at least, Hindus have a powerful national life, which remains all but utterly uninfluenced by foreign preaching. What we say is tantamount to a criticism of evangelical conceptions of Christ's character, and is therefore likely to provoke controversy. Nay, it has already done so. What truth there is in such controversy it behoves all faithful Christians to try to find out. And for non-Christians, too, the discussion has a practical importance; because, the greater the depth and variety of spiritual estimate which an independent and enlightened appreciation of Christ's existence may indicate, the greater the gain to humanity. And, even if any unintentional misconception on the part of foreign propagandists, perfectly sincere and natural, has to be exposed and admitted, is it not much better that the misrepresentation be at once acknowledged, rather than that Christ should fail to find wide acceptance among the children of men? Be it a Hindu, or a Mohammedan, or a Christian, who undertakes to offer higher and correcter interpretations of the Messiah's being and ministry, it only concerns us to examine whether the interpretation be really high and correct; and, if so, we feel bound to accept it. Let Christ's character and dominion increase, let him be made recognizable and

acceptable to all; and if, in consequence, his witnesses and servants should suffer a decrease in their reputation for wisdom and insight, that decline itself is an honor, and that decrease a glory.

The argument generally put forward in vindication of the evangelical views of Christ's life — namely, that Christ is universal — does require a moment's consideration. No doubt every great religious genius is universal. Human nature is very much the same everywhere; and the greatest representatives of it are sure to be recognized by mankind, wherever born and however brought up. This applies certainly more to Christ than to any other prophet. But, nevertheless, each prophet has his personal surroundings, his peculiarities of time and circumstance. These give a peculiar significance to his life and ministry. There is about him the local, the personal, the historical, as well as the universal. There are the conditions of birth, climate, nationality, education, and the thousand transmitted peculiarities of the age. Those who leave these out of consideration can never understand the true character of the man whom they view as their exemplar. But men are often apt to forget this truth. Sometimes, it is impossible to act up to this truth. We shall give one familiar instance. For modern Eng-

lishmen, whose education and dispositions might be said to be almost the very opposite of what we orientals are, who, after staying in our country for scores of years together, at last declare that it is impossible for them to understand the native character, it is all but hopeless to enter into the instinctive and hidden peculiarities of Eastern life and feeling. So much truth there is in this statement that the reader will at once bear out the statement that, with many Europeans, the expression "oriental character" means a mental organization essentially and generically different from anything that goes by the name of character in the Western world. But there are exceptions to this rule. For instance, the estimate of Brahmo views of the mission and character of Jesus Christ by such men as the late Dean Stanley, is most sympathetic and appreciative. It shows that there are at least some influential Christian men, who do not necessarily construe difference of opinion into personal hostility.

We shall try to point out here the main views of Christ's mission and character, as laid down by Keshub Chunder Sen, the Brahmo leader. He has made three public and authoritative statements of his principles on this subject. The first time he spoke was in his lecture on "Jesus Christ, Europe

and Asia," in March, 1866, immediately after his secession from the Adi Brahmo Somaj at Jorasanko, Calcutta. With all the light of his genius and eloquence, he held forth Christ as the great man and the mighty reformer. Christ's influence, "but a small rivulet at first, increased in depth and breadth as it flowed along, and swept away in its irresistible tide the impregnable strongholds of ancient error and superstition and the accumulated corruptions of centuries." He described Christ's mission thus: "Sent by Providence to reform and regenerate mankind, he received from Providence power and wisdom for that great work." But Keshub gave utterance to views which, in their capability of development, produced intense expectancy among all classes. Setting forth in glowing sentences the moral greatness of Christ, "his tenderness and humility, lamb-like meekness and simplicity, his heart full of mercy and forgiving kindness, and set on the other hand his firm, resolute, unyielding adherence to truth," Keshub declared, in a breathless climax, "Verily, Jesus was above ordinary humanity." Well-meaning Trinitarian missionaries at once concluded that the Brahmo Somaj was now "not far from the kingdom of heaven." But few at that time took sufficient heed of a line of sentiment which the Brahmo

leader struck out for himself, while expatiating on the more than human excellences of the character and precepts of Jesus. "Was not Jesus Christ," he asked, "an Asiatic? I rejoice — yea, I am proud — that I am an Asiatic. He and his disciples were Asiatics, and all the agencies primarily employed for the propagation of the gospel were Asiatic. In fact, Christianity was founded and developed by Asiatics in Asia. When I reflect on this, my love for Jesus becomes a hundred-fold intensified. I feel him nearer my heart and deeper in my national sympathies. Shall I not rather say he is more congenial and akin *to my oriental nature, more agreeable to my oriental habits of thought and feeling?* And is it not true that an Asiatic can read the imageries and allegories of the gospel and its descriptions of natural sceneries, of customs and manners, with greater interest and a fuller perception of their force and beauty than Europeans? In Christ, we see not only the exaltedness of humanity, but also the grandeur of which Asiatic nature is susceptible. To us Asiatics, therefore, Christ is doubly interesting; and his religion is entitled to our peculiar regard as an altogether oriental affair. The more this great fact is pondered, the less I hope will be the antipathy and hatred of European Christians against oriental

nationalities, and the greater the interest of the Asiatics in the teachings of Christ."

The long interval of apparent silence which Keshub preserved on this subject, and the diverse channels of thought and development into which he proceeded during that time, allayed the premature anticipations of his speedy conversion to evangelical Christianity. Many of his quondam admirers were so far discouraged as to circulate the report that he had recanted his previously expressed views. Keshub's lectures and orations in England, in 1870, sufficiently showed that he had recanted nothing, withdrawn nothing, but that, on the contrary, his ideas and principles with regard to Christ and Christianity had, during the last four years, greatly gained in maturity and soundness. The high encomiums bestowed upon him by such men as Dr. Pusey, Dean Stanley, Lord Lawrence, and bodies of clergymen in different parts of England, amply testified that the position of the Brahmo Somaj, in regard to Christ and Christianity, had not receded, but advanced considerably. The extent of this advance, however, no one had any means or opportunity to measure until nine years later. In April, 1879, Keshub delivered his lecture on "India asks who is Christ?" It was exactly thirteen years after his

preliminary utterances on "Jesus Christ, Europe, and Asia." The line of original thought indicated in his last great public enunciation had now led him to form a perfectly unique estimate of the character and mission of Jesus Christ. "England," said he, after a few opening sentences, "has sent to us, after all, a Western Christ."

It seems that the Christ that has come to us is an Englishman, with English manners and customs about him, and with the temper and spirit of an Englishman in him. Hence is it that the Hindu people shrink back and say, Who is this revolutionary reformer who is trying to sap the very foundations of native society, and bring about an outlandish faith and civilization quite incompatible with oriental instincts and ideas? Why must we submit to one who is of a different nationality? Why must we bow before a foreign prophet? It is a fact which cannot be gainsaid that hundreds upon hundreds, thousands upon thousands, even among the most intelligent in the land, stand back in moral recoil from this picture of a foreign Christianity trying to invade and subvert Hindu society; and this repugnance unquestionably hinders the progress of the true spirit of Christianity in this country. When they feel that Christ means nothing but denationalization, the whole nation must certainly, as one man, stand up to repudiate and banish this acknowledged evil. But why should you Hindus go to England to learn Jesus Christ? Is not Christ's native land nearer to India than England? Are not Jesus and his apostles and immediate followers more akin to Indian nation-

ality than Englishmen? Are not the scenes enacted in the drama of the Christian dispensation altogether homely to us Indians? When we hear of the lily, and the sparrow, and the well, and a hundred other things of Eastern countries, do we not feel we are quite at home in the Holy Land? Why should we, then, travel to a distant country like England, in order to gather truths which are to be found much nearer our homes? Go to the rising sun in the East, not to the setting sun in the West, if you wish to see Christ in the plenitude of his glory and in the fulness and freshness of the primitive dispensation. Why do I speak of Christ in England and Europe as the setting sun? Because there we find apostolical Christianity almost gone; there we find the life of Christ formulated into lifeless forms and antiquated symbols. But, if you go to the true Christ in the East and his apostles, you are seized with inspiration. You find the truths of Christianity all fresh and resplendent.

So much for the moral and spiritual advantages which our oriental nature confers upon us by enabling us to gain a full and clear insight into the nature of Christ. In 1866, Keshub had asked, "Is not Christ above ordinary humanity?" and he had answered his own query with the exclamation, "Verily, Jesus is above ordinary humanity." The recurrence of the same adjective both in the question and the answer suggests the thought that Christ's humanity then was *extraordinary*. Keshub

substitutes the word "divine" for "extraordinary," after a decade of meditation and culture. His statement in the year 1879 he commences with these words, "I desire to discourse on the great subject of the divinity of Jesus." He asks: "Is Christ altogether human? Are we satisfied that there is nothing but earthly humanity in him?" It appears that Christ believed earnestly and consistently in what should be called the doctrine of divine humanity. Christ is said to have struck the key-note of this doctrine in the formula, "I and my Father are one." This was an announcement of "identity with the godhead." In analyzing this announcement, Keshub says he finds "nothing but the philosophical principle underlying the popular doctrine of self-abnegation in a very lofty spiritual sense. Christ destroyed self. And, as self ebbed away, heaven came pouring into the soul. For nature abhors a vacuum; and hence, as soon as nature is emptied of self, divinity fills the void. The nature of the Lord filled him, and everything was divine in him."

He always felt that the root of his being was God himself,—a fact of which we are not always conscious. He had his life rooted in divinity. He felt always that the Lord was underlying his whole existence. And, therefore, without

equivocation, and with all the boldness and candor of conscious simplicity, he proclaimed unto the world the fact that he was one with God.

According to oriental custom, Jesus had renounced friends and family, home, country, and possession, and had nothing in or about him that could indicate an individuality. The foxes have their holes, and the birds of the air their places of shelter, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. Who was his mother, and who were his brethren? Whosoever doeth the will of his Father in heaven, the same shall be his brother, sister, and mother. "This unique character of self-surrender is the most striking miracle in the world's history." The Brahmo Somaj has been represented as holding the personal extinction of Christ in this doctrine. But the self-surrender of Christ did not, in any sense, annihilate his personality: it simply brought an all-pervading influx of heavenly life into his soul. The divine attributes of holiness, love, and wisdom, were manifested in him as much as created character can contain.

But, certainly, it was never meant to be held that the infinite perfections of the absolute Godhead had ever descended into Jesus or any other man. Yet the possibilities of Christ's character were immensely

vaster than the actual achievement. Yet Christ was created for a definite purpose ; namely, that of representing perfect humanity and absolute sonship on earth as an exemplar of a model man, a complete piece of God's workmanship, showing what the human soul should be in this life. And that purpose Jesus Christ had fully answered. Genuine, deep-souled, perfectly pure-minded humanity, that wholly sacrifices itself to the love and holiness of God, is truly divine. And to Jesus belongs that divinity. It was not personal extinction, it was utter personal subjection, it was the personality of man at one with the personality of God. It was the absolute reconciliation of Father and Son. This was the life of Christ.

"The pre-existence of Christ," as explained by the Brahmo leader, is apt to be interpreted into a mystical conception. But, carefully viewed, it is a very different idea. Christ is said to have existed before his birth as a part of the divine plan for the future good of mankind. The omniscience of God knew from the beginning the destinies of men. His perfect knowledge saw, in their fullest relations, the causes and consequences of human sin and salvation. His all-comprehending, far-beholding providence grasped all the measure and magnitude of

evil in man's nature, and grasped also all the ways and means, all the opportunities and occasions, which might be utilized as a dispensation by the power of which the children of men might be delivered from the evil which encompassed them. Both the evil, and the dispensation for deliverance from its power were present in the divine consciousness from the beginning of the world. The future Christ, as God had meant to create him, the potential energy of the as yet unborn Christ, existed in the eternal depths, in the dispensation which was to come in the fulness of time. In that stage, Christ certainly had no personality. He was the thought and energy of God. He was the plan of God. He was the light of divine reason and love, as yet involved within the great impenetrable. In that sense, the whole universe was at one time merely the thought of the Infinite Being. And every one of us has sprung from the formless ocean of divinity that spread through all. But, Keshub sufficiently explains his meaning, when he speaks thus: "Christ pre-existed as an idea, as a plan of life, as a pre-determined dispensation yet to be realized, as a purity of character, not concrete, but abstract."

There may be equal misapprehension in regard to Brahmo views respecting Christ's immortality. The

resurrection of the Son of Man does not, in the remotest sense, mean his absorption in the Spirit of the Father. It is but the raising of the spirit of Jesus before the throne of the righteousness and love of God. Jesus lives in heaven, not as an impersonal and absorbed essence of the divine consciousness which he was before he came to the world, nor as a material form with which popular imagination clothes him, but as a separate, personified soul in its own sphere of blessedness, achieving a higher and still holier standard of perfection than was ever known in his life on earth. His perfection on earth was relative, his perfection in heaven ever tending to the Absolute. But, among us to-day, he lives as a great leaven. "He lives," says Keshub, "in all Christian lives and in all Christian influences at work around us. You may deny his doctrine, you may even hate his name, but you cannot resist his influence. Christ exists throughout Christendom like an all-pervading leaven, mysteriously and imperceptibly leavening the bias of millions of men and women."

The next time that we hear the Brahmo leader speaking of Christ is in 1882, in his lecture on "That Marvellous Mystery, the Trinity." This sets forth his most mature views on the nature and

mission of Jesus Christ. Beginning to receive the founder of Christianity as a great man and a reformer in 1869, proceeding to recognize him as divine or ideal humanity in 1879, the recognition and development culminated in 1882 by rehabilitating Jesus as the second person in the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity. In this last and newest statement, it is Keshub's object to trace "the continued evolution of the Logos, and its graduated development through everlasting stages of life." The Hindu *avatar* rises from the lowest scale of life through the fish, the tortoise, and the hog, up to the perfection of humanity. Such, precisely, is the modern theory of evolution.

How from the lowest forms of gross matter is evolved the vitality of the vegetable world in all its fulness and luxuriance! And, then, from the most perfect and vital types of vegetable life springs the least in the animal kingdom, which again rises, through endless and growing varieties, to the very highest in intelligence and sagacity. But creation stops not here. From animal life, it ascends to humanity, and finds its full development in man. In the evolution of man, however, creation is not exhausted. It goes farther and farther still along the course of progressive humanity. In the earliest phase of his life, whether in the little infant or in the primitive barbarian man, with all his highly finished organism, is but a creature of God. Through culture and education, he rises in the scale of

humanity till he becomes the son of God. You see how the Lord asserted his power and established his dominion in the material and the animal kingdom, and then in the lower world of humanity. When that was done, the volume of the Old Testament was closed. The New Testament commenced with the birth of the Son of God.

But the process of evolution does not terminate here. The development of sonship in a solitary individual does not fulfil the purposes of creation. The great, ultimate object of Christ's sonship is to develop it in *all humanity*. Christ is only *the way*, but what force is it that can lead mankind through the way to the end? This is the Holy Spirit. Keshub thus enunciates his doctrine of Trinity:—

Here, you have the complete triangular figure of the Trinity, three profound truths,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—making up the harmonious whole of the economy of creation. Gentlemen, look at this clear triangular figure with the eye of faith, and study its deep mathematics. The apex is the very God Jehovah, the Supreme Brahma of the Vedas. Alone, in his own eternal glory, he dwells. From him comes down the Son in a direct line, an emanation from Divinity. Thus, God descends and touches one end of the base of humanity, then, running all along the base, permeates the world, and then by the power of the Holy Ghost drags up regenerated humanity to himself. Divinity coming down to humanity is the Son: Divinity carrying up humanity to heaven is the Holy

Ghost. This is the whole philosophy of salvation. Such is the short story of human redemption. How beautiful! How soul-satisfying! The Father continually manifests his wisdom and mercy in creation, till they take the form of pure sonship in Christ; and then out of one little seed-Christ is evolved a whole harvest of endless and ever-multiplying Christs. God coming down and going up,— this is creation, this is salvation. In this plain figure of three lines, you have the solution of a vast problem. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost; the Creator, the Exampler, and the Sanctifier; I am, I love, I save; the Still God, the Journeying God, the Returning God; Force, Wisdom, Holiness; the True, the Good, the Beautiful; *Sat*, *Chit*, *Ananda*, "Truth, Intelligence, and Joy."

But Keshub strongly sets his face against worshipping Christ as Man-God. "A Man-God is not intelligible. It is untrue and absurd. It is a lie and a fiction. A God-Man is quite intelligible, a possibility in the nature of things. Here, man remains man, and God is only superadded to his nature. Humanity continues to be humanity, but divinity is engrafted upon it. Christ is not, never was, never will be God, the Father. He is humanity pure and simple, in which divinity dwells. In him, we see human nature perfected by true affiliation to divine nature. And in this affiliation we realize fully the purpose of Christ's life and ministry. He shows us not how God can become man, nor how

man can become God, but how we can exalt our humanity by making it more and more divine, how, while retaining our humanity, we may still partake more and more of the divine character." To be Christlike is always a process of transformation, bringing us nearer and nearer to God. The achievement of divine humanity has taken thousands of years, and will take many thousands more. The leader of the Brahmo Somaj thus idealizes Christ as universal humanity:

As the sleeping Logos, did Christ live potentially in the Father's bosom, long, long before he came into this world of ours. As the Lord spoke, the Logos or Reason came forth, and was lodged in creation, not in human beings alone, but even in animals. Wherever there is intelligence, in all stages of life, where there is the least spark of instinct, there dwells Christ, if Christ is the Logos. In this right and rational view, do not the Fathers all agree? Do they not speak of an all-pervading Christ? Do they not bear unequivocal testimony to Christ in Socrates? Even in barbarian philosophy and in all Hellenic literature, they saw and adored their Logos-Christ. In the midst of this large assembly, I deny and repudiate the little Christ of popular theology, and stand up for a greater Christ, a fuller Christ, a more eternal Christ, a more universal Christ. I plead for the eternal Logos of the Fathers, and I challenge the world's assent. This is the Christ who was in Greece and Rome, in Egypt and India. In the bards and the poets of the Rig-Veda was he. He dwelt in Confucius and in

Sakya Muni. This is the true Christ whom I can see everywhere, in all lands and in all times, in Europe and in Asia, in Africa, in America, in ancient and modern times. He is not the monopoly of any nation or creed. All literature, all science, all philosophy, every doctrine that is true, every form of righteousness, every virtue that belongs to the Son, is the true subjective Christ whom all ages glorify. Begotten by the "volition" of Almighty God, as Tertullian says, the Spirit-Christ spread forth in the universe as an emanation from the Divine Reason, and you can see him with the eye of faith underlying the endless varieties of truth and goodness in ancient and modern times. He is the *Chit-Christ*, pure intelligence, the Word of God, mighty Logos. Scattered in all schools of philosophy and in all religious sects, scattered in all men and women of the East and the West, are multitudinous Christ-principles and fragments of Christ-life, one vast and identical Sonship diversely manifested.

Keshub speaks of Christ as the prince of idealists. And his religion is spoken of as supreme idealism. And it is in this idealism that India has a hold on the real nature of Christ and Christianity. The East has always been the home of idealism. The prophets and seers of Asia penetrated the veil of phenomena, and saw behind it the life and meaning of all things. Exuberant nature, making slender calls upon physical energy, invited the mind to communion and contemplation. Zoroaster on the

mountain tops, the old Aryan sages of India in the deep wood or romantic river banks, found the whole world idealized before them into the purposes and perfections of the Great Spirit. The hymns of the Rig-Veda, the mystic utterances of the Upanishads, the Gathas of Zend, the Psalms of David and the songs of Solomon, the wild strains of Jeremiah, and the ecstatic visions of Isaiah,—all, all were inspired by a strange idealism that pervaded the world of matter and the world of man. The raptures of mystic devotion and the traditions of an unspeakable faith were handed down from race to race, from realm to realm, till the whole atmosphere of the Eastern world was suffused with an everlasting glow of spiritual relations and prophetic vision that found their counterpart nowhere else on earth. In that luminous atmosphere, the spirit of Jesus has been the brightest star. Before him and around him there was a great galaxy of enraptured idealists who foretold him, saw him in their dreams, and centred their expectations in him. And, when he came in the fulness of time, his glory overshadowed the glory of others: while he increased, they decreased. Born thus in the hemisphere and home of a sublime prophetic fervor, he inherited the devotion, the self-immersion, the faith, the fasts, and the

night-watchings, the deep sorrow and the continued meditation, the poverty, asceticism, and the meekness of all those who had gone before him. The fragments of primitive prophecy and enraptured poetry, the ancient lights of goodness and self-sacrifice, were concentrated in him as in a focus. John had announced the kingdom of heaven. Jesus pointed to it. Pointed where,—to the groves and pastures, the hills and lakes of his native land? No: he pointed to the kingdom of heaven in his own heart. He pointed to the inner sphere where his disembodied spirit communed with the eternal Spirit of life; and, beholding God in him and himself in God, he exclaimed, "I and my Father are one." But, if he beheld his Father in his soul, he also beheld his brethren in him, and cried, "Abide in me, and I in you."

This is pure idealism. The idealism of Christ is an exalting theme. He lived in a material body, it is true; but his mind lived in its idealized home, the kingdom of the Spirit. He was not intent upon what he would eat or what he would wear, but lived on the bosom of the Paternal Spirit, partaking of meat that we know not of, and drinking of a fountain which was the very word of God. The soul of righteousness and love he saw in all material nature.

It was always a present miracle to him, it was always a present providence upon which he could depend for everything. He looked upon the gardens, the vines, the fields, lambs, and shepherds, with an idealizing gaze. He saw in them meanings, analogies, and sentiments which nobody else could see. He looked upon the clear sky, and with a mystic sight beheld Moses and Elias and all the hosts of heaven,—beheld himself in their midst, in the wonderful originality of a glorious idea. Nay, he idealized even his flesh and blood, and administered them to his disciples as a sacrament whose sublime beauty touches and softens even the hard materialism of the present day. The invisible he made visible in himself while he lived; and, now that he is invisible, and we would fain behold his face once more, but cannot, he has left behind him the reality of idealism, which is the only solid world of truth, goodness, and love amid this vain outward world of show, change, and death. In that goodness and righteousness alone, the duties and labors of this life have earnest truth in them. In the reality of that love alone, the deep wounds and sufferings of this world have anything like consolation. But in the midst of this hard material world, there is a hidden world of God's righteousness and peace, where prayer brings its response,

and faith its reward. In that world which he called the kingdom of heaven he lived. It is the world of idea, the world of spirit. In this ideal world, he was a king. Was his throne a throne of gold and sapphire? Were his ministers the emissaries of wealth and worldliness? His throne was made up of meekness and righteous peace, and his ministers were men who had forsaken all to serve their God in suffering and death. What purer idealism can there be than that the ministers and judges of a kingdom should be without name and influence, without purse and scrip, without friends and home, sent out like lambs before wolves? And, above all, what sadder and sublimer idealism can there be than that a king, adored in life and death, more adored when dead than when living, should be made to die in company with thieves and malefactors, with dishonor, desertion, foul indignities, with poverty and desolation for his only reward? His sceptre was a reed, and his crown was made of thorns. He was naked and thirsty, he was bleeding and pierced, he was hooted and jeered. Thus died the King of the Jews! What more bitter contradiction could there be between reality and faith than at this spectacle of wonderful death? What greater inconsistency could there be between this outward meanness and inward royalty?

But let us not forget that the death disguised an idealized and eternal life, and the suffering was the price and the future standard of immortal glory.

Christ then was an idealist. He lived in the midst of an idea. He reigned and ruled in an ideal community. He wanted to establish an ideal kingdom. He tried to inculcate an ideal brotherhood. The relations which he sought to lay down between the soul and God still constitute the ideal piety of the world. These ideals were so deeply opposed by the realities that surrounded him that the opposition cost him his life. None understood him, not even his dearest disciples; but only the Father knew the Son, as the Son knew the Father. Their mutual knowledge was above this earth: it was ideal knowledge, or, to use a more familiar word, it was *spiritual.* It was divine. The spiritual and ideal were one in Christ, because the spirit of divinity was in him; but the spirit of Christ's idealism never for a single moment led him to destroy or ignore his own personality. His self-surrender meant self-subjection. His personal sacrifice meant the utter consecration of his own will and life to the will of the Father. Happiness, honor, and royalty he forsook, because his Father gave these not to him. Dishonor, humiliation, and death he preferred, because

his Father willed to fill up his cup with them. By his self-surrender, we have learned to subject our rebellious selves to the will of God. His marvellous patience in suffering sweetens our cup of woe. His faith in the support of the mercy of his Father brings the strong arm of infinite love to hold us, when we tremble in weakness; and the sublime beauty of his death has taken away from our eyes the darkness and desolation of the grave. No: Christ did not destroy his personality. Christ did not come to teach us to destroy our personality. Christ did not teach the miserable doctrine of absorption and annihilation: on the contrary, Christ has perpetuated and glorified his own personality and that of his followers, by establishing between God and man the eternal relation of filial progress. Man's personality is then truly human and complete when it is not opposed to God, and, being one with the Father, is our genuine freedom.

To accuse the Brahmo Somaj, therefore, of a pantheism which is soul-destroying and annihilates human personality is to do them very great injustice. On the contrary, a too prominent insistence on man's personality is the distinguishing feature of modern theism. But it should always be borne in mind that the Brahmo Somaj is not frightened by

the name of pantheism, as evidently it is not frightened by the name of Christianity. That pantheism which identifies the universe with its Maker, and man with God, the Brahmo Somaj repudiates. That pantheism which takes away from the sinner's view the painful spectacle of his own sins, and leaves no field for repentance, progress, salvation, and a personal sense of God's grace; that pantheism which ignores the infinite difference between man and God, the Brahmo Somaj repudiates. But the Brahmo Somaj was never afraid of recognizing the spirit of a presiding Providence in all things. And it is not backward to recognize the inspiration of the world's masters and prophets. Glad to discover the glory and wisdom of the Supreme Spirit on the resplendent face of nature; glad to behold his beauty and peace in the breezy twilight of morning and evening; glad to hear his whispers in the events of human life and history, shall we not rejoice to mark and adore his workings in the impulses and spiritual heroism of such men as Jesus Christ? Yes: Christ lived in God, loved in God, taught in God, suffered in God, that we, too, might live and love, suffer and teach, as he did. Christ's whole nature was swimming in the ocean of Divinity, as this visible universe of ours swims in the might and majesty of God.

The Divine Spirit permeates every pore of matter and of humanity, and yet is absolutely different from both. There is no flight of fowls to their evening home that is not directed by the unerring hand of Divine Love. There is no lily in the field and no rose in the valley whose bloom and fragrance do not come from the breath of Infinite Beauty. There is no beauty, no wisdom, no faithfulness, no purity, no piety and self-sacrifice that is not inspired by him. The goodness of all the good is a ray of reflection from him, the greatness of all the great points to his throne on high. If this be pantheism, the Brahmo Somaj is not ashamed of it, because it has been the faith of all the most religious and of all the highest teachers of mankind. If this be mysticism, the Brahmo Somaj is proud of it. It is eminently the spiritual instinct of India.

From such a stand-point only it has been attempted to view the important attitudes of the career of Jesus. I have tried to orientalize him as much as possible. To be able to illustrate more fully the distinctions which may be said to exist between Eastern and Western conceptions of Christ, let us place side by side two strongly marked characters. One of them is an elaborately learned man, versed in all the principles of theology. His doctrine is historical,

exclusive, arbitrary, opposed to the ordinary instincts and natural common sense of mankind. He insists upon plenary inspiration, becomes stern over forms, continually descants on miracles, imports institutions foreign to the genius of the continent, and in case of non-compliance with whatever he lays down condemns men to eternal darkness and death. He continually talks of blood and fire and hell. He considers innocent babes as the progeny of deadly sin: he hurls invectives at other men's faith, however truly and conscientiously held. No sacred notions are sacred to him, unless he has taught them. All self-sacrifice, which he does not understand, is delusion to him. All scriptures are false which have grown up outside of his dispensation, climate, and nationality. He will revolutionize, denationalize, and alienate men from their kith and kin. Wherever he goes, men learn to beware of him. He is a Mlecha to Hindus, a Kaffir to Mohammedans, a rock of offence to everybody. He is tolerated only because he carries with him the imperial prestige of a conquering race. Can this be the Christ that will save India?

By his side place another figure. He is simple, natural. He is a stranger to the learning of books. Out of the profound, untaught impulses of his divine

soul, he speaks ; and, when he speaks, nations bow their heads. His voice is a song of glory : his sentiments are the visions of a heaven in which all men are united by love. His doctrines are the simple utterances about a fatherhood which embosoms all the children of men, and a brotherhood which makes all the races of the world one great family. The sinful and the sorrow-stricken, the ignorant and the unwise, the publicans and harlots, the very dregs and refuse of mankind, he draws around him. What he touches he purifies, but the touch of no impurity can taint the light of holiness in him. The fountains of rightcousness he drinks as they flow from heaven. The profoundest wisdom and holiness come to him as comes natural breath to us. The unspeakable peace of God descends upon his soul as showers descend upon the thirsty soil. What is invisible to others is seen as daylight by him. The music that no mortal ear can hear, the celestial music of the union of spirit with spirit, filleth the expanse of his nature. His every word is a revelation, and he beholdeth revelation among all nations and amid all faiths. His love invites men to rest and reward. His presence is the presence of all that is good and loving: his memory is a benediction unto all. Babes and children he calls unto him, but the

wise and self-righteous he puts away. His institutions are the simplest forms of instinctive love and remembrance, and his service is the affectionate labor of self-devoted faith. All lands echo his teaching: all nations respond to his mystical utterances about heaven and earth. Wherever he treads flowers spring under his feet: wherever he stands all sorrow and self-complaint are hushed. His long, uncut locks of hair, in which the pure zephyr of the mountains plays; his trailing garments of seamless white, whose touch the diseased and sinful eagerly long for; his beautiful feet, washed with precious ointments and wiped with women's hair; his self-immersed air, absent eyes, brightened forehead, which show that his spirit is far, far away, communing with beings whom we do not see,— point him out to be the prophet of the East, the sweet Jesus of the Galilean lake, whom we still see in our hearts. The testimony of his life and death makes heavenly realities tenfold more real to us. His patience and meekness in suffering are like an everlasting rock, which we may hold by when tossed in the tempest of life. His poverty has sanctified the home of the poor: his love of healing fills the earth with innumerable works of benevolence and sympathy, and fills with wonderful hope the bedside of the

sick and dying. His death and resurrection call us to the mansions where he has gone to wait for us. Throughout the whole Eastern world the perfume of his faith and devotion has spread. The wild genius of Mohammed knew and adored him amid the sands of Arabia. The tender love-intoxicated soul of Hafiz revelled in the sweetness of Christ's piety amid the rosebuds and nightingales of Persia. And here, too, in India, though latest and most backward, we Hindu Aryans have learned to enshrine him in the heart of our philosophy, in the core of our exuberant love. Look at this picture and that. This is the Christ of the East, and that of the West. Very true that the pictures are extreme. And there are men in the West with an Eastern imagination, as there are orientals who have inherited the coldness and hardness of Europe. But when we speak of an Eastern Christ, we speak of the incarnation of unbounded love and grace; and when we speak of the Western Christ, we speak of the incarnation of theology, formalism, ethical and physical force. Christ, we know, is neither of the East nor of the West; but men have localized what God meant to make universal.

CHAPTER I.

THE BATHING CHRIST.

IF any one wishes to see innocence washed into holiness, natural piety changed into inspired, godlike spirituality, a pure-minded, tranquil youthfulness consecrated to untaught service, unknown sufferings, and unexampled death, let him turn to the bathing Christ. Why did Jesus bathe? Water to the oriental means perpetual blessedness. The rain which fertilizes is God's grace. The stream that rustles on is a running source of divine inspiration. We in India, at various times, have worshipped the God of rain. The confluences of our rivers, the mountainous solitudes where they take their rise, and the white, illimitable expanse where they mingle with the sea, are more sacred than we can tell. There is a transcendental sense of the divine in them,—the origin, the flow, the end of all things. Power, speed, fruitfulness, beauty, purity, come from the river. We Hindus, like our far-off ancestors, make offerings to the sea, the emblem

of all-investing eternity. There is no pilgrimage without immersion in water. The Brahmin's most pious exercises consist of ablutions. With him, it is a daily baptism. Bathing is ever holy. Over and above the morning bath, which renews the body, and is an invariable prelude to the daily devotions, we immerse ourselves in water at special times. Whenever an oriental has to purify himself from a personal impurity, from a social contamination, from a death in the household; whenever he has to rise from one stage of religious life into another; whenever he requires an initiation into higher spiritual life and precept,— he must bathe. Hence, Jesus bathed.

John, in preaching his baptism, preached a change of life. It was a forsaking of gross sin, of heartless worldliness, of mean selfishness, which then characterized the people of Jerusalem and the neighborhood. It was a remission of sins through repentance. It was washing out the palpable carnalities of a common life by a tacit confession, by a solemn vow, by an imposing ceremony. Life to us in the East is like the feverish, fitful day, with its heats, excitements, and enervating fatigues. The coolness of air and water is like a regeneration. Water washes and purifies, water cools and comforts, water beautifies

and refreshes. Throughout our part of the world, therefore, bathing typifies the cleansing and refreshing of the spirit by a cleansing and refreshing of the body. It is so hot in our burning, mid-day sun,— so dry, dusty, weary, cheerless is the day for the greater part of the year,— so oppressive with thirst, perspiration, a growing sense of bodily discomfort and impurity, that, with a strong, silent longing, we look to water, washing, and immersion. The analogy between the outer and inner in the imaginative Asiatic is most natural. And, hence, Jesus bathed.

But did Jesus bathe as others bathed? Was it in his case the remission of sins by repentance? Ah, no! In the midst of the awe-struck crowd that gathered to listen to the violent words of the wild man there was Jesus also. Unknown and unknowing, there he stood, a sweet, mysterious youth, known perhaps to the Baptist only, who recognized him among the listening hundreds, and spoke of him as he had spoken of no other man. Others washed themselves of their sins in water, in the flowing tears of repentance, "the fruitful river in the eye." But Jesus washed himself in the Spirit Divine. Ceremonial water cannot wash mere flesh into the spirit. It is sinlessness that can be washed into true spirituality. In divine blessedness, in the rush-

ing river of perpetual inspiration, the sinless Jesus immersed himself. The all-investing eternity of truth, holiness, and love,— the Spirit,— changed him into a spirit. His baptism was a birth into the land of spirits. Henceforth, Jesus was no longer flesh and blood. He was spiritualized humanity, he was the son of God. He sought the baptism which thousands sought. The Baptist would not suffer him. John knew who it was that looked up to him for the initiatory rite. "I have need to be baptized of thee," said he. But the type of meekness did not want any distinctive recognition. He levelled himself to the surrounding humanity. The purificatory rite which sanctified the publican and the sinner sufficed for him. Yet what a difference there was in the kind and character of the purification! That was a strange purification, diffusive and everlasting. Untold thousands have been washed and blessed by his baptism, and raised from earth to heaven. We men of the New Dispensation are enjoined to bathe daily in the baptism of Jesus. We have united together the sanctity of Christian baptism and Hindu ablutions. When Jesus bathed, whole humanity bathed in him, and became clean. Hence, Jesus bathed.

It was far away from the clamorous, the distract-

ing scenes of the town. The barren, beetling rocks, the wide waste of wilderness, the solitude and silence of the desert, the overarching calmness of the infinite blue above, the perpetual course of the clear, crystal waters, the mystery of their rise and disappearance, their tranquil, sound depth, coolness,—all these, and the feelings in the mind of a young devotee they inspire, might very well suggest a new life, a different life,—a higher, holier, strange, unfamiliar life. And, amid all this, the gaunt, weird figure of the Baptist, his mysterious meat and drink, his shaggy garment and girdle, the fierce, scathing eloquence of his cry, made the thoughts and suggestions of that new life more impressive still. John had come to prepare the way of the Lord. How were men to walk in that unknown way? The external washes externals. And when, in India, the mere clothing gets soiled, we wash it well. But, when a metal becomes impure, the uncleanness, it is thought, pierces the very grain whereof the vessel is made. Then, no washing can cleanse it; fire, blazing fire, alone can make it clean. Who was to teach them that? Their sins might be outwardly renounced, and the garments of their character washed by the water of John's repentance. But, to purge, change, and renew the very substance

of that character, was not some other baptism necessary,— the baptism of fire and the spirit, the baptism of suffering and blood? Who was to give them that? The object was fitting, the occasion was fitting, the place was fitting; and Jesus determined to bathe. He bathed himself into a new life and new work, the life and mission for which he came to the world. A fresh, youthful life of meditation, prayer, faith, purity; a warm, loving, aspiring, modest, sweet life, was going to be devoted forever as a sacrifice, that by the giving of it men might be called to sonship, sainthood, and salvation. Oh, how awful was that devotedness! How much did it involve! How different was his resolution from that of other men!

The secret thirty years, veiled in an inviting mystery, were only a prelude to his baptism. His baptism was the end of the beginning, and the beginning of the end. It was the first of the two great human sacraments. It was the crisis of all previous faith and aspiration. It was the fateful, pregnant juncture between the life of the Messiah and the mere devotee. Well may it be commemorated and made perpetual in the spiritual crisis of every sincere seeker of the kingdom of the Spirit. Well may it be an everlasting covenant in that holy church

which is compared to his body. The eventful future was involved in that simple act of initiation. Everything else — life, pleasure, prosperity, honor, domesticity, hope — melted away in the water of baptism. Everything — habit, home, friendship, relationship, safety, and comfort — was renounced in that blessed bathing. The water entered into the very pores of his being, and washed away all else from there. The water entered into the most profound recesses of his being, and bathed it in a consciousness of divine presence, divine calling, divine devotedness, divine absorption. All earth faded away before him. It all seemed to be a new world. The whole heart was new. The whole future was new. Heaven and earth looked as they had never looked before. Was it not the kingdom of God that appeared within and without? He prayed to enter into that kingdom. That prayer was immediately responded to. It was not the remission of sin, but the re-entering of Paradise. It was the reconciliation of God and man. It was the second Adam reviving the world, the re-establishment of highest relations between life and eternity. "And, lo! the heavens opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and, lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I

am well pleased." Who would not wish to bathe in his baptism, and hear such a voice from the heavens above; that is, in the deep places of their own hearts?

THE HOLY SPIRIT AS DOVE.

In the great Upanishads, the divine as well as the human spirit is likened unto the bird. The bird is a mystic poetic being, half-celestial, half-earthly, flying over ocean and mountain heights, across continents, in all latitudes. Who has not heard of the Garuda and the Shuka of Hindu mythology? And there is no bird like the dove. The dove is the bird of gentleness, quiet and sweet, singing in low calm notes in the morning and evening tide. Its round, mild, beautiful eyes shed the light of benignant softness. Among birds or animals, no creature can approach to the dignified gentleness of the dove. The dove is the bird of innocence. It avoids every scene and place where harm is possible: it disturbs no one, brings loss or hurt to no one, costs no one anything. It lives in desert places and leafy shades in seclusion, giving every one who sees it the idea of simple unobtrusive innocence that pleases by its quietness. The dove is the bird of love. It has always been said that the tenderness of this sweet bird for its

mate is most romantic. The simple song it sings is filled with an affectionate ring, always responded to by the fellow-singer from a neighboring bush. The bird lives retired in strange solitudes, its only enjoyment being the tender love which it gives and receives. The dove is the bird of melancholy. There is a vague sadness in its low long note. In our simple villages there is quite a superstition that, if the dove settles in any neighborhood, there will be sorrow, and before long, death. The dove is the bird of holiness wanted in sacrificial offerings among the Hebrews. It is the bird of the poor who used to present it before the altar to wash away their sins, and propitiate the God of the temple. It was the holy bird of hope that, during the universal deluge and the destruction of the world, appeared to Noah with the green olive branch in its mouth to announce the good news that there was yet the prospect of life for God's fair creation. The spirit of gentleness, melancholy, innocence, love, holiness, and hope is symbolized by the dove, and hence in the shape of a dove the grace of God lighted on the head of the baptized Messiah in the holy stream of Jordan. In that spirit did Jesus preach and act as long as he lived among men. Meek, gentle, innocent, loving, sorrowing, retired, pure, and self-sacri-

ficing, Jesus showed that he had truly received in his heart the Spirit which descended upon his head, in the form of the holy dove, at the baptism of John.

CHAPTER II.

THE FASTING CHRIST.

JESUS has idealized the temptations of spiritual life. He met them once, he conquered them forever. We meet them often, and conquer them seldom. But the great consolation and greater faith which we hold is that all the insidious impulses to which a child of the Spirit may be prone, were involved in the trials to which the fasting Christ was exposed, when he was driven to the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He fulfilled the conditions of fasting laid down by himself. Washed in the Jordan, anointed with spiritual unction, he was led up to the mountain to fast.

What is it to fast? It is a universal Eastern usage. Hindus, Hebrews, Mohammedans, all fast. To struggle with the animal in man, to deny and discipline the gross carnal self, is ordinary fasting. It is good for every man to practise it at times. But fasting may mean more. It may mean shutting out the universe of sense altogether, and living in the in-

finite impulses of the spirit within; to forsake and ignore the gravitating flesh, to get free from the life and mind that always point beneath, and soar on the wings of the soul in its ascending flight to the boundless azure of God. In toiling up the stony wilderness, Jesus ascended to the solitary presence of the Supreme. The divine approval in his baptism led to the seeking of the divine purpose. Whenever the heart is immersed in the overflow of eternal grace, it immediately retires within itself, to have an insight into the eternal will. The question "What must I do to serve thee?" reiterates itself in the great void wilderness of soul, and there is no quiet until the response come. This is a secret of the inner life, to which whoso that has experience there must testify. And the significance of this secret is of unearthly value unto every one who is about to consecrate himself to the service of God forever. The spirit of the regenerate bathes, and then waits, watches, communes, fasts, and prays. We all know this in the East. In such holy moments, the calling of the called is declared unto them, the command of God is heard, the mission of life pointed out. In the marvellous sense of self-consecration which Jesus felt, how overpowering was the impulse to fast and seek solitude!

Fasting is easy and helpful, so long as the shekinah of the unspeakable presence overshadows the devotee. Hunger, weakness, desire, the claims and cruelties of the world, are soon forgotten. But, even in the most exalted mood, the Spirit forsakes humanity for intervals, and leaves it, with such faith and resolution as it has, to fight with its inherent weaknesses. Then comes the real danger of fasting. It was so in the case of the Hebrew David and Job, of the Hindu Narada, of the great ascetic Gautama, of every one, in fact, who tries to fulfil the great purposes of God. Struggle, earnest, deadly struggle, is the universal, indispensable law of the soul's advancement. He who has never labored at the all but hopeless difficulty of self-conquest, knows and cares naught about the mortal pangs of human weakness. To try in sincere, absolute earnest, to surrender one's all to God is to know the fatal feebleness of self, the pitiful incompetence of personal endeavor. The weaknesses of the carnal self, the animal man, are by far stronger than the strength of ordinary religious motive. Those in whom the spirit has been mightier than the flesh, in whom the flesh has been truly sacrificed to the spirit, are exceedingly few. To renounce the world is to be conscious of its temptations. To turn one's

back to carnal joys in view of the spiritual kingdom, is often to find it dark both before and behind. If fasting is an opportunity given to the spirit, it is also an opportunity given to the devil. It is when the flesh is weakened that the devil finds his time. Who or what is the devil of the Christian conception, and the Ashura of the Hindu? The devil is the carnal propensity in man, the devil is the arrogance and exaltation of self, the devil is the fondness for worldly vanities and triumphs, the fondness for wealth and dominion. The devil is therefore the tempter. All that tempts the spiritual man to act in opposition to the laws of the Spirit is the devil. And again, on the other hand, it is only when the flesh is weakened and subjected that the spiritual man finds his true manhood. It is then only that he receives the strength to subdue Satan, and keep him in perpetual bondage. The fasting Christ exemplifies both the weakness and strength of human nature, the inherent weakness of the material and animal self-conquered by the ever-growing power of the spirit.

THE BREAD OF LIFE.

The temptations of Christ are peculiarly those of absolute self-consecration to faith and divine service. They may throw occasional light on the

trying incidents of worldly life, but no ordinary experience, thought, or research can adequately construe those typical temptations. He that struggles to renounce *all*, and throw himself headlong into the sea of unexplored impulses, such as unreserved self-surrender must bring, can get a true insight into the strange trials that preceded the ministry. Hunger typifies the primal, the universal want of the whole animal kingdom. The energies and efforts of by far the greater part of mankind are stimulated by the direct or indirect promptings of that powerful instinct. As soon as a man determines to throw in his whole being into a great, unprecedented, unremunerative cause, the first uncertainty with which he is confronted is the uncertainty of bodily support. In the opening spring-tide of youthful excitement, the question of bread does not occur. But, after the stony wilderness of the world has been partly traversed, and the forty days' fasting has exhausted the powers of endurance and hope, the craving necessity for food becomes an earnest, fearful fact; and the devoted enthusiast has to awake, and ask himself where bread is to be had.

Jesus was conscious of his vocation. He knew whom he had been called to serve. He knew the infinite wealth and munificence of his Father. He

was conscious of the wonderful efficacy of prayer. The experience in him had fully dawned that faith could remove mountains. Jesus felt he was the Son of God. That the Son should starve at the threshold of his great Father's bounty, might naturally prompt the suggestion, "Son of God, command that these stones be turned into bread." It was the spontaneous appeal of the afflicted, hungering flesh. He evidently felt so. It seems as if for a moment he reasoned between physical and spiritual needs. But the decision is speedy and clear,—"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The supreme necessity of life is misrepresented. It is not the perfect security of physical support. It is strict conformity to the highest, purest impulses of the spirit within. That is the supreme and all-important secret of human worth and success.

One may perhaps urge that the spirits of different men yield to widely different impulses. Be it so. Let each one obey what is deepest, highest, and purest in him. That is the word, the revelation, the Adesh of God. He that allows the consideration of carnal comfort, even of carnal necessity, to stand in the way, runs the risk of losing the highest self in him. The struggle for existence in a truly

spiritual man points to absolute fidelity to the ideal, while hunger and fatigue stare him in the face. The whole question of worldliness and asceticism centres here. The bread which man eats is a small matter, and the sure accompaniment of what he holds as his highest pursuit. But he that sacrifices his ideal to his bread finds, when it is too late, that "man does not live by bread alone." No man who was truly faithful in heart and conscience to his God ever died in want of bread. But thousands who spent their lives in earning and storing up the wherewithal of this world died in hunger and thirst which no gold could quench. The spiritual guidance, which, the Providence that pervades all things, vouchsafes to the discerning mind of the man of faith, is the true means of earning bread both for the body and the spirit. That is the inaudible word which proceeds from the mouth of the living God. Blessed is that man who knoweth how to live upon it. Here lies the whole philosophy of spiritual dependence, faith, and renunciation. Here lies the meaning of the prayer, "Lord, give unto us this day our daily bread." God can verily turn earth and iron into genial sustenance for the body of his sons. But blessed is the son who can say, "I do not want thee to work any miracle to feed my flesh; but feed me, O Lord, with thy living word."

All true self-sacrifice commences with the repudiation of physical wants in the absorbed pursuit of the perfection of the spirit. Christ was the principle of self-sacrifice incarnate. He not only sacrificed his bread, which is but a symbol of the flesh, but his bodily life itself, to the word of God. The height of self-denial may be fitly called asceticism. Could there be higher self-denial, a truer control over the strongest instincts of nature, than to cast away as evil the suggestion of invoking divine help to feed him at the point of starvation? Let those who pray for plentiful harvests, recoveries of royal patents, and victories in battles, reflect well on this. But let it be borne in mind that Christ accepted the most ascetic self-denial only when it came in the path of divine command and divine service. He forsook the bread of the body for the food of the soul. He was not anxious where to lay his head, the wherewithal to feed his mouth, because he was well aware of the infinite bountifulness which environed him. His mendicancy was that of the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, which are fed and clothed by the unseen Arm above and underneath the earth. His poverty was the boundless affluence which has ever fed the humble and poor in spirit. Fed with the Messianic flesh and

blood, Christendom's inner wealth and strength scatter truth, while other religions have apparently dwindled down. For the evanescent bread of the flesh that perisheth, Christ could not be turned from the living word of God, upon which humanity eternally feeds. "Man does not live by bread alone."

TEMPTING GOD.

Self-sacrifice may sometimes mean mortification of the flesh. But mortification of the flesh does not always mean self-sacrifice. Religious men in the East have a tendency to become heroes. If the aspirations to become pious once seize us in that part of the world, we hate reason and calculation in every form. Fear of desperate deeds becomes almost synonymous with infidelity. Rashness, recklessness, becomes a positive passion. Daring courage takes the form of a strong love for physical suffering. A disregard, nay, not seldom, the hatred of domestic and personal relations, becomes meritorious. The characteristics of the devotee are austerity, self-torture, and universal causticity. This is asceticism on its abnormal, misused, exaggerated side. It is most difficult to separate arrogance from self-sacrifice. Pride creeps into the holiest and humblest exercises of self-discipline. It is the supremest

natures only that escape the taint. The practice of asceticism therefore is always attended with great danger. Instead of abasing self, in many cases it serves the opposite end. Fasting produces the conceited consciousness of imposing a sort of indebtedness upon heaven. The anchorite believes himself, and is believed by others, to be able to work miracles. There is an incipient wish to thrust upon God the claims of man's self-sacrificing piety. There is a semi-sceptical desire to draw largely upon the omnipotency and all-mercifulness of Providence, and thus put its sufficiency to a severe test. The devotee instinctively wishes to produce an effect upon the world by the startling nature of his self-imperilment. Dangers and miseries are courted, formidable risks are run, and hair-breadth escapes are made. The world beholds these signs, and applauds. Here is the source of all that miserable vanity which makes a parade of spiritual mysteries, and tries to make God the tool of man's own glorification. Where is that sweet, modest reasonableness of true piety which shrinks from incurring every unsanctioned risk, but readily pours out its life-blood like water, when called upon so to do in the service of the heavenly Father? If the rash enterprises into which zealots launch with a view to their own distinction

were analyzed by the scrutiny of spiritual insight, three-fourths thereof would resolve themselves into an impulse to hurl themselves from mountain-tops, in the vain hope that angels would minister unto their safety. Every form of self-invited suffering is not acceptable sacrifice before the Lord, every form of self-invited death is not martyrdom. It is often nothing more than a foolish desire to place Divine Providence under a trial and obligation, and to achieve a cheap victory over the laws of nature. Not a few sincere men, who would otherwise become models of spirituality, thus present spectacles of confusion, disease, uncleanliness, and abnormal trouble. To establish a sound, sweet harmony between strict self-denial, true, unworldly spirituality, and a wise, humble obedience to the laws of nature, to reconcile asceticism with a wholesome fear of God's ways, is the problem that lies before the religious reformer. But so wayward is our nature that, when we are blessed with joy, our desire for increased joy becomes insatiable, and we begin to loathe suffering in every form. Contrariwise, when a share of ordinary suffering is measured out to us, we would willingly court more suffering, and indulge our innate arrogance by figuring as great sufferers. When, therefore, the hungering Christ found the stones were

not converted into loaves, and that man must sometimes feed himself internally by the travails of the spirit, the natural temptation was to invite more travail, nay, death itself, by throwing himself from the top of the pinnacle where he is taken. The pinnacle, in the case of every ordinary man, is the height of his own self-consciousness. Let him not hurl himself, when thus standing, into any self-sought achievement, lest, in splitting himself on a rock, he prove that he, too, is made of the common vulgar clay. As for the fasting Christ, he weighed well the iniquitous importance of the evil suggestion. Scriptural passages, promises, and prophecies came crowding into recollection, that supported the plausible temptation: "It is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Doubly strong as the vainglorious impulse thus became, the genius of Jesus rose above its power. He could distinguish between the impiety of self-sought danger and the dignity of God-appointed crucifixion. He had the power of discerning between sanctioned and unsanctioned suffering. And he cried out from the depth of his faith and wisdom, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God." Why should we hurl

ourselves from mountain-tops to tickle men's fancy? Why seek to gratify the spirit of arrogance in us, which dares to impose trials upon the all-sufficiency of the Infinite? He that tempts God easily steps from folly to infidelity. Rather let the spirit of humility and submission lead us to face every circumstance of woe and peril in which it may please our Father to place us for the maturity of our faith and the accomplishment of his purpose. That constitutes the privilege of sonship and faithful service, wherein unseen angels minister and watch around us. He who can overcome the natural temptations which beset him, in whatever sphere of life he has chosen for himself, can safely reckon upon the help and unfailing grace of Heaven.

HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE.

The world worships the supremely gifted. They do not worship the world: they hold it in slavery. But, before they enslave it fully, the world tries to enslave them. The test of true genius is the temptation of worldly dominion. Hundreds yield themselves to it, and are lost. Hundreds seek it in vain, and, in the absence of success, pine and despond, and disappear. Nothing chills the mind so much as apparent failure: nothing exalts and encourages all performance like success.

Is it possible that genius can be unconscious of the immense results producible by the co-operation of spiritual and earthly influences? The practical form which such a consciousness is apt to take constitutes a strong and universal temptation. Worldly ascendency and rule, severed from his holy calling, never tempted Christ. His nature, glowing with divinity, would be impervious to the love of wealth and power as such. But the kingdom of the earth, as supplementing the kingdom of heaven, tried his spirit. To the sweet soul of Jesus never belonged that gloomy type of locust-eating, leather-girdled asceticism which abode alone in desert solitudes, and denounced sin, sinners, and society alike. His was the asceticism of a loving service to God and man, that gathered all, and picked out the good points in each. He was mightily conscious of his powers to lead, found, conquer, command, and rule. He knew that the world waited but for his word, to recognize him as its king, if he would recognize it in his future course of action. The angels and evil spirits seemed willing to do him equal homage: heaven and earth seemed to abide his election. The world worships power, and only expects to be led by the competent leader, when he arises. Divinity, on the other hand, chooses to be served by the holiest and best. Not

that the unworthy and the humble have their offerings rejected; but service, whether it comes from the strong or the weak, must come from the whole heart. In the ever-shifting scenes of life, however, there are so many upper and lower spheres of saintly activity, so many aims and ambitions that revolve round the central ideal, that whole-hearted service to God grows difficult to distinguish, and still more to carry out as a practical reality.

I have already said that earthly success often seems to accelerate spiritual success. The sanguine, the adventurous, the intelligent, the forcible characters of the world cannot but sometimes see their chance and opportunity. A comparison between the service of God with and without worldly resources is inevitable at critical moments in the life of him who is going to devote himself forever, as Christ was, in the forty days of the fast. For a brief period, the devotee is apt to be unsettled in the course of his future action, considering the worldly prospects he could master, the fair realms of universal sovereignty spread invitingly before the dazzled view. The world claims but a tacit submission, a little mental compromise, a mere attitude of deference, and the joys of this world chime in with the joys of the next, to make the prospect of happiness

complete. Not a few of the predecessors of Jesus were carried away by this view, preaching religion, seeking power. The most ancient writings and sacred traditions of the land held out promises to that effect. The tendencies, wants, and beliefs of the age were ripe for their fulfilment; and, mounting the summit of his powers and self-consciousness, Jesus saw the outstretched kingdom of the earth at his feet. For a moment, he was staggered; but it was only for a moment. He instantly perceived, in the illumination of his resplendent genius, the eternal distinction between worldly and spiritual kingdom. The equilibrium of the spirit returned with tenfold strength. He instinctively saw it was Satan, in the garb of worldly power, persuading him to divide his loyalty to his God. He was pierced with pain at the thought of serving any one but his Father. He burned with indignation at the thought of sharing his life's work between heaven and earth. He clearly ascribed this thought to the inspiration of the genius of evil, and uttered those fiery words of scorn, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." These words derive their full meaning when their utterance emanates from a towering genius like that of Jesus, who, if he chose,

could seize the mastery of the whole world. In forming and uttering this resolution, he was thrown upon the resources of his unaided will. Neither the voice of God, nor the service of angels helped him. His selection of absolute devotedness was his alone. He devoted the undivided loyalty and the undivided service of his whole being and character to his God; and, when he scorned to make the least compromise, even to gain the sovereignty of the whole world, then divine grace encircled him in its infinite embrace, evil and delusion of that kind left him forever, his trials ended, and "angels ministered unto him."

CHAPTER III.

THE PRAYING CHRIST.

CHRIST prayed. He prayed often. He prayed always. Did he not pray the whole night long? For days together? My soul longs to realize the state of mind in which Christ prayed. What were the thoughts, what were the words, he addressed to the Father, when he went to those mountain tops? Has man ever spoken as he spoke to heaven? They watched him from a distance as he prayed, and so strange did he seem while praying that, when he ceased, they approached him in humble awe, and said, "Lord, teach us to pray." Christ not only prayed, but he was prayer. Prayer was incarnated in him. They *saw* prayer, when they beheld Jesus praying; for, "as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and glittering." The mystic devotional syllable is said in the Veda to have invested the face and beard of the primeval utterer with a golden glory. The true word of prayer is changed from glory to glory,

from the inner to the outer glory. The countenance of the Christlike man while praying is the countenance of God. The light of the ages and the calmness of the spheres sit upon his brow. Prayer becomes the fashion of the eye, and the expression of the countenance. Prayer becomes the pure lustrous drapery of the body and mind. Hidden spirituality is revealed. It is not the words so much as the attitude that reveals the secret spirituality of prayer. And thus Christ revealed prayer. Christ revealed the laws of prayer. His was the revelation of the true attitude of prayer. It matters little if his actual words have not come down to us. It matters not if such as have come down do not satisfy us, so that we wish to know more. He has bequeathed to us the spirit of prayer. And that spirit fructifies according to the endless variety and potency of human nature. These fruits abound in the lives of all the children of Christ. He prayed without ceasing. From the moment of his baptism to the awful moment when he committed his soul into the hands of the Father on the cross, did he not continually look up? He looked up to heaven for light, strength, and guidance. And what is prayer but looking up? But his continued prayerfulness did not prevent him from approaching the

presence of the Father at all special seasons. He prayed at his baptism while in the flowing streams of Jordan. Praying, "the heavens opened, and the Spirit descended upon him." And from that day, whenever the Christlike man prays, the heavens open and the Spirit descends. And then, after his baptism, the Spirit led him to the wilderness, there to fast and pray and prepare himself for his ministry. Can there be true preparation for the solemn work of life and death without prayer? And when, by his severe, long-continued prayer of forty days, he was blessed with the approbation of God and the angels as to his future mission, he came down to the field of work. But he could not work alone. Who were to be his fellow-laborers? And "so he went out to a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And, when it was day, he called unto him his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom he also named apostles." His apostles, predestined like himself in the eternal purposes of God, called and elected, were pointed out to him in long solitary prayer; and he had only to name and adopt them. While about to engage himself in the arduous responsibilities of his ministry, whether it was to heal the sin-struck and sorrowful, or to feed the multitude with the bread of life, or

to raise the dead and inert from the grave of spiritual ruin, did he not go "into the wilderness and pray"? Did he not "lift up his eyes to heaven," "sigh to God," and "give thanks"?

Aye, his great miracles of cure, precept, and reform, were first wrought in himself through the holy mystery of sympathy and prayer, and then manifested by him to the world as testimonies of the grace and power which the Father had committed into his hands. And, with the generous, self-humiliating impulse of his strange love, he promised that "greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father." Thus praying, laboring, and teaching, when the three short years expired, and the last melancholy evening of his public ministry came, after he had performed the sad ceremony of offering unto his apostles the last sacrament, washed their feet with his own hands, taught them, warned them, consoled them,— once more "he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy son." That is a long, marvellous prayer,— the seventeenth chapter of John; and deeply does it describe the relations which in all previous prayers he had laid down between himself and his God on the one hand, between himself and his apostles on the other. If prayer means unity

with the spirit of God and the power over all flesh, if prayer means unity with the kindred spirits of God's children, to whom we are brought to fulfil his purposes, surely this was the prayer of prayers. And I need only refer to his marvellous prayers of forgiveness and self-consecration on the cross, to prove that Jesus lived and died in prayer. Whether healing or teaching, walking, meditating, or suffering, speaking or silent, he continually moved in the atmosphere of prayer. Those who approached him while he was alive, and those who approach him in spirit now, breathe that holy, healthful atmosphere. In breathing that atmosphere, I have, like others, often meditated on the law which combines its different elements. His unspeakable faith and dependence, which made him look up to heaven so often; his love and obedience, which made the purpose of God an invisible law unto him, his perpetual seeking of divine strength, light, and guidance,— made up for him that heaven of prayerfulness in which his soul lived night and day. The unity of will with will, deepened by faith, love, and obedience, made his prayers natural and incessant. Such prayer made his activity instantaneous, and that activity was crowned with the miracles of success. His whole character was composed of these elements, every one

of which is a law in prayer. Faith, dependence, love, obedience, self-surrender, and the unity and activity of will,— these constitute the laws and spirit of prayer. Some men pray for what they feel no need, and a great many pray for what they have no belief in. They are very few who have real confidence in the efficacy of their supplications. Yet, without implicit, absolute trust in the healing power of God, how can the ailments of the soul be cured? Faith is the first law of prayer, and puts the mind in a fit mood to receive spiritual help. The attitude of up-looking faith is the chief medium through which the mind of God can be poured into the devotee's mind. By the vision of instinctive trust, the praying Jesus first beheld what was in the purpose of the Father, and then prayed for the fulfilment of that purpose. In our blind ignorance of that, how often do we pray that the very opposite of divine will be done? Prayer without faith degenerates into objectless routine, or soulless hypocrisy. Prayer with faith brings Omnipotence to back our petition. Better not pray until you are in real serious need of a thing, better not pray unless and until your whole being respond to the efficacy of your supplication. When the true prayer is breathed, earth and heaven, the past and future, say Amen. And Christ prayed such prayers.

The sacred law of prayer is dependence. Men's prayers are much oftener dictates than supplications. They would ask Heaven for aid, but would not wait for an answer, or they would have their prayers answered by their own ways and means. Jesus depended, his whole religion was dependence. What the Spirit taught him that he taught the world. Whither the Spirit led him, there he went. He threw himself, as it were, into the appointed machinery of divine arrangements; and a special providence was looked forward to by him in every event. Simple as a child, he breathed his wants, and then knew no more than to depend on the Father. Dependence upon the bountifulness of God is the natural result of true trust, and the two together form the strength and simplicity of religious character.

Yet faith and dependence are impossible without love. Trust becomes the easiest and most spontaneous thing when there is love. The highest law of prayer, therefore, is the love of God. The true poetry of spiritual utterances comes from the tenderness of the devotee's heart. It gives wings and inspiration to faith, it crowns dependence with the heavenliness of humanity, it brings down showers of grace, and obtains immediate response from the

bosom of God. The secret of the mystery of Christ's prayerfulness was his all-piercing love. Whoso therefore prays, let him pray with love. Truly, in prayer, as in all other spiritual exercises, love is the fulfilment of the law.

The fourth law of prayer is strict and particular obedience to the commandments of duty. The ceaselessly praying Christ was also ceaseless in his labors to do good to all, so much so that practical usefulness has often been identified with the life of the Messiah. Obedience to the laws of life laid down by the Spirit is the only means by which man can hasten the fulfilment of his supplications. By holy and incessant work only can we have any insight into the secrets of successful life. That obedience in Jesus amounted to absolute and unconditioned self-sacrifice. His will merged into the will of God.

The very name of Christ calls these realities of character into the believer's mind. In the mystical theology of the Hindu, what distinction is there between the name and the spirit? The name and the essence are one, and the bare mention of the one awakens all the underlying virtues of the other. "Whatsoever therefore ye ask in my name" carries with it the hidden and profound significance of char-

acter. Unless therefore one is purified by shedding sympathetic blood over the emblem of Calvary, and risen with the resurrection of the Son of Man, how dare he ask anything in the name of Christ? Will crying, "Lord, Lord," avail on that day when the commandments about self-denial, crucifixion of the flesh, faith, love to man, asceticism, and seeking first the kingdom of God, are set at defiance? And when one has kept these sayings, conformed to their spirit, and like a wise man built his house upon a rock, need he be bound to an endless repetition of the letter of Christ's name, and to holding the dogma of his technical intercession, in the face of his own declaration, "I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you"? True intercession, then, means the reception of this spirit of Jesus; and praying in his name means prayer in that spirit.

Prayer, viewed closely, is a deep mystery. How can man's supplications change the purposes of the Immutable? How can divine forcknowledge be influenced by the petitions of little-sighted humanity? The praying Christ is the solution of the deep mystery of prayer. His unity of will with the Father, his poverty, his faith, his love, his patience, his self-surrender and obedience, prove that all the

change is in man and not in God. It proves that prayer calls out all the best that there is in us. It is the foreknowing purpose of God, that ordained and created out of itself in us the character of Christ, in order that the law of prayer may mean the union of spirit with spirit. And does not this union intensify all our energies, all our emotions, all our deepest wants, and highest aspirations? A man beholds himself at his best when he prays. He realizes his whole future. He is incarnated to himself in his own destiny. The past in the shape of its prophets, the future in the shape of the kingdom of God, surround us when we pray. Oh that, like Christ, we always remained what we are during our prayers!

Having said so much, I will only conclude with a few words on the model prayer of Christ. I consider it to be a marvellous utterance. Many consider it deficient in passion. To me, it has the calm, hushed unimpassionateness of the whole world's future. Not a sentence of that prayer has been exhausted in two thousand years. How many thousand years will search its heights and depths! The more I gain in faith and lose in self, the more grows upon me the tranquil majesty of the Lord's Prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven" unites all mankind in the twofold bond of filial and fraternal love. "Hallowed

be thy name" concentrates all the essence of worship, holy hymn, and pious utterance. "Thy kingdom come" involves the prayer and effort of all religious dispensations. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" includes every aspiration after personal and social morality, and represents the practical application of the foregoing prayer. The entire teaching of faith, resignation, and asceticism, with which the Sermon on the Mount is full, finds expression in the simple, childlike petition of "Give us this day our daily bread." The model prayer condenses its universal magnitude into a pathetic, personal character, when the Father is asked to "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." And this culminates in the supplication, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." These seven prayers fit into each other like component parts of a finished piece of mechanism. They suit all races, all ages, all stages of personal and national progress. From the grandest to the humblest aspirations of humanity, they embody all, they represent everything. Each one of them can be separated into ten thousand prayers, each prayer equally real, equally sweet. Yes, the Lord's Prayer was the essence of Christ's prayerfulness. It was his inner, intense life, poured

out into audible supplication. His utterances, his thoughts, his attitudes, his life, and his death, moulded into a model for all men to fall into, constitute the Lord's Prayer.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TEACHING CHRIST.

BESIDE the coast of Cæsarea Philippi, behold the teaching Christ. He blesses Simon on the shady hillside for recognizing him as "the Son of the Living God." For the beauty and power of his blessed precepts, some called him Elias, others Jeremias, some called him John, or one of the elder prophets come to life again. But Jesus was not anxious to be discerned by the outside world. For the right recognition of that little world of souls which he had been slowly forming around him, he was truly anxious. His whole soul burst out into a shower of benedictions when, for the first time, they greeted him as the Son of God.

It has been sometimes asked, What was new in Christ's teaching? I answer that question by asking, For what offence did they destroy Christ? Was it not because he called himself the Son of God? That which caused his delight caused also his death. Because the Scriptures say, as soon as the recogni-

tion came from Peter, he charged his disciples to tell no man that he was the Christ, and foretold the sufferings and death which would inevitably result from the fact being known. The distinctive position, then, which Christ meant to occupy as a teacher, was that of the Son of God. Prophetic teachings agree in the main. Yet each great teacher has his distinctive truth to deliver. Competing trades and sects of religion hurl at each other the charge of selling stale articles. The mutual scornful challenge is, "Produce the credentials of any *new* truth that you may possess." As if all freshness and vigor had forsaken God's world, as if the kingdom of the Spirit were a dull small circle endlessly repeating itself! Why is the New Testament new? Its teachings of faith, self-sacrifice, unselfish love, and spiritual holiness have their parallel elsewhere. What is unparalleled in the New Testament is the simple unique teaching that Christ is the Son of the Living God. To us in the East the son is the substance, the part, nay, the essentials of the father reborn in the flesh. The son is the inheritor, the regenerator, nay, the saviour of the father, the reproducer of the character and virtues of the race. The father's existence is ineffectual, and his destiny is oblivion. There is no heaven for him, but the *na-*

raka of childlessness, if he cannot perpetuate himself in the son. The Son of God and the Son of Man mean to me one and the same thing. The substance of God in man is the inheritor, reproducer, and regenerator of humanity.

"The best expression of creation," says Keshub, "so far as we have been able to trace, is sonship. The last manifestation of divinity is divine humanity. Having exhibited itself in endless varieties of progressive existence, the primary Creative Force at last took the form of the Son in Christ Jesus. Can God create without a purpose? Merely supplying a pattern could not be the be-all and end-all of creation. Where millions perished in disobedience and sin, of what avail was the appearance of a single instance of obedient sonship? All, all required to be saved. If sonship there was, it was bound to develop itself not in one solitary individual, but in all humanity. . . . Look at the clear triangular figure with the eye of faith, and study its deep mathematics. The apex is the very God Jehovah, the Supreme Brahma of the Vedas. Alone in his unmanifested glory he dwells. From him comes down the Son in a direct line, an emanation from divinity. Thus God reaches one end of the base of humanity, runs along the base, overspreading and influencing the

world, and then, by the power of the Holy Ghost, drags up regenerated humanity to himself. The Father coming down to humanity is the Son. The Father carrying up humanity to heaven is the Holy Ghost. This is the whole philosophy of salvation."

Christ then, as the Son of God, was the manifestation of divine character in humanity. The unattainable infinity of the Supreme Godhead forbids definite comprehension, and makes practical imitation impossible. We can meditate upon and adore his glorious attributes. We can wonder and bend before his all-compelling Presence. In communion and transcendental *Samadhi*, we can feel absorbed in his blessed nature and intense light. His peace goeth forward before us, and stilleth everything within and around. But what does all that avail, if our character is dissimilar to his, and if, in our deeds, thoughts, wishes, and practical purposes, we tread in other courses than those appointed by his holy will and eternal wisdom? Some one must *show us the way to this*, else all piety is unreal and immoral. Religion becomes the incoherent dream of the purblind enthusiast. David commits unpardonable crimes during the respites of his intermittent inspiration. Judhistir publishes a half-uttered falsehood. Moses murders an Egyptian taskmaster. Mohammed pro-

claims a bloody war. And Sakya Muni omits to lay down the doctrine of God. Who but the Eternal himself can reveal his character in relation to man? That character descends in Christ for the enlightenment, conversion, regeneration, and adoption of all men. Therefore, Christ is the Son of God and the Son of Man alike. He is the Way, the Word made flesh, the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The teachings of Christ are many, but they are only such as guide all men to be the sons of God. The kingdom of heaven had been a traditional and prophetic idea, familiar long before Jesus had begun to preach it. But Christ's kingdom was the kingdom of sonship. What personal and spiritual excellences does not obedient sonship include? Purity and morality are inculcated by the Mosaic, and by every other system of ethical law, but the utter crucifixion of the flesh and the reborn life of the spirit laid down by Christ is the perfection of humanity as it exists in the Father in heaven. The enthusiasm of love which compels submission and welcomes suffering and death only because it is conformable not to one's own will, but the will of the Father, is nothing but the unquestioning affectionateness of an ideal son. The faith and childlike trust that finds no inclination to think of

the morrow, but depends upon the Father for everything necessary for the well-being of this world and the next, is the self-assuring and self-rewarding reliance of the Son of God. The law of meekness, the law of forgiveness, the law of philanthropy, the law of resentment, of self-purification, of faith, of self-sacrifice, were included in the supreme truth of sonship which Christ claimed for himself and all those who believed in him. Therefore, it may be said that Christ did not come to teach faith, or love, or morality, or piety, but that all these virtues, and countless others, were involved in the doctrine of spiritual sonship which, above all things, he taught, and has left behind him. It enfolds within itself as an eternal potency the very source of the law-making faculty in human nature which adapts its moral deliverances to every occasion of duty and trial as it arises. Does not Jesus promise many more wonderful things to the productive faith of his disciples than he himself worked? The Holy Spirit whom he bequeathed to humanity would, he knew, suffice for all truth, all precept, all moral requirement. Christ teaches not as a philosopher, but as one having authority from above. There is the teacher who teacheth many things,— every rule of life and every detail of conduct. There is also the teacher

who saith little, teaching only that by learning which a man may instinctively do what is right and good. Lessons are endless, the spirit of man is one; and, when the spirit is full of light, every part of life shineth out.

The mission of the true teacher is, therefore, to teach only what kindles the spirit in man, and leave everything else to the man himself. Now, three things kindle the spirit,— the first of which is Love. Call it enthusiasm, or charity, or passion, or piety, or devotion, or Bhakti, the essence of it all is the same, — that mysterious faculty which is called by the name of love. It is the key to all earthly and heavenly life: its uses and abuses form a marvellous study. The Son of Man has condensed all truth in the teaching that the love of God is the first law, and the love of man is the second; and they exhaust all the laws and prophets. The second thing that kindles the spirit is Faith. It is the eye of the soul, the faculty of light which discerns the dark secrets of the soul and of God, proves the realities of our earthly abode, and the heavenly kingdom which the world continually denies and disproves. It is the magic which transforms impending failure into absolute success, which has given humble men victory over the mighty and the great, which alone unlocks

the gates of truth in human nature. The third thing which kindles the heart is Holiness. As there is a passion of love in man, so there is a passion of sanctity. Holiness means the enthusiasm of perfection as it exists in the blessed nature of the All-holy. This holiness, on its negative side, includes morality, which is but the completion of self-restraint, but, on its positive side, means perpetual advancement in motive, feeling, wish, and thought to the oneness of will with God. Holiness opens a new order of being to the man of common impulses, and is inexpressibly higher than mere deeds. It is the fulfilment of all command, the accomplishment of the law of obedience in conscious sonship. The sum of this threefold teaching is humanity. It includes every beatitude and every virtue. It is higher than morality, higher than theology, higher than religion, higher than philanthropy, because this humanity is the perennial fountain from which all wisdoms, all benevolences, all pieties, spring from age to age. Humanity, then, in faith, love, and holiness, concentrates the whole spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. Half of it is composed of the love of God, and the other half of the love of man. The secret fasting and prayer; the meekness, gentleness, rejoicing amid persecution and pain; the reliance and childlike

trust,— are all but sparks from the flame kindled by the filial love for God. The forgiveness, the charity, the active service, the peace-making, the blessing for curses, the non-resistance of evil, are but the results of the genuine love of man. The whole life of the Messiah was one continued acting out of this double-natured love.

One most characteristic teaching of Jesus is taking "no thought for the morrow." The whole structure of the resignation, dependence, trust, and asceticism, so natural to the people of the East, is raised upon this inculcation of faith. Faith is the corner-stone of the religion of Jesus. It is the light of the body, the singleness of the eye, the power of perception of all spiritual realities. It is the secret of all miracles, all healing, even the raising to life of the dead. He exalts his precepts to the culminating point, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." Here, love and faith ripen into holiness. The purity of the body, the deeper purity of the mind, the absolute renunciation of anger, lust, and covetousness, the doing of all that is good, the suffering of all wrong, constitute "the strait gate and narrow way which leadeth unto life." This is the holiness which ought to be laid up "as treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt."

This, then, is the sum of what Christ teaches as constituting humanity, or true sonship. But, if he teaches humanity, does he not also teach divinity? Almost to his dying moment, he taught that the Spirit of God is in every man,— nay, he left that truth as the all-sufficing legacy to his disciples. Trying to realize that Spirit in himself, he felt he and his Father were one. Trying to realize it in his disciples, he felt that he was in them and they in him. This divinity descended into him in such measure that he said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Thus, God can be seen in man.

Is the Eternal, then, to be approached and thought of as a man thinks of a man? He is awful, inconceivable, illimitably great and glorious. Who can find him, hold him, or utter him? All philosophies, all scriptures, meditation, worship, and song stand hushed and abashed in his presence. No: the Infinite is not man, but he is exceedingly manlike. Not in body, for God is a pure spirit, but in nature and in soul. Unlike us in his immensity and unspeakable glory, in the unapproachable heights and unimaginable varieties of his being, he is exceedingly like us in those graces and blessed spiritual gifts with which he has filled our inner being. Because man's soul is exactly made in the divine image,

therefore to know our true nature is to know as much of the Infinite as can be known on earth. The man of mere flesh and blood is so very unlike the truly spiritual man that the two may almost be said to be beings of different natures. The spiritual man only who has got rid of the bonds of carnality knows how like and yet unlike God is to man. The carnal worshipper either prays to an abstraction or to an idol of flesh and blood like himself. The spiritual man beholds the Spirit with the eye of purified faith, and worships with all the enthusiasm and love which eternal beauty and holiness can call forth from the bosom of his human son groping and yearning after him. God is the Absolute Whole; and how many universes does that Whole include? Man is at best a spark, an infinitesimal atom of those eternal fires. The part cannot hold or answer for the whole; yet all fire is fire, and the spark suggests the conflagration. To be able to feel how far like and unlike the divine spark in us is to the eternal glory of the Spirit Father, it is necessary that we should be Christlike, and put on that sonship which he taught and practised. For this purpose, the utmost devotions and the strictest self-discipline and faith are wanted. When a man has been able to burn out all carnality from his soul, and can, in spiritual expe-

rience, clearly distinguish his higher self, or spiritual mind, from his lower and carnal mind, then, indeed, is he able to discover the likeness and unlikeness of the Deity to mortals. It is the immortal that can commune with the Immortal. It is the spirit that can perceive the Spirit. Flesh and blood cannot see, but the Son can behold the Father.

CHAPTER V.

THE REBUKING CHRIST.

THE strong and fierce language used on occasions by him who is fitly known as the Lamb of God is a difficulty to the mind of the "mild Hindu." Truly, we are familiar with the fiery wrath of some of our ancient sages and seers. Durbasha and Vishwamitra were the impersonation of kindling curse and fire-breathing sanctity. But was not Jesus the image of meekness and submissive love? Hence, perhaps, a great many who honor him, ignore these violent utterances, and are silent over them, as if they did not dare to inquire into sentiments which they would rather see dropped out of the Gospels,— nay, which might be interpolations after all. They dwell upon the more amiable traits of Christ's teaching. There are some, again, who openly accuse him of fanaticism and vindictive wrath. I refer to the class of pseudo-sentimental rationalists, who bitterly denounce orthodox faith and piety, but feel their delicate susceptibilities hurt

when Jesus rebukes hypocrisy and falsehood. And, lastly, there are those, unfortunately too many of them in our country, who, forgetful of other characteristics, imitate the apparent and occasional violence of Jesus, and imagine that the secret of all evangelistic success lies in vilifying the convictions of other men.

The right of rebuke is not unfrequently accorded to religious teachers. Resentment against sin and corruption is recognized to be legal, according to exalted notions of duty. But did Christ always keep himself within the limits of that law? Did he denounce those who were notorious for their sinful and corrupt lives, and treat with gentleness the failings of such as were strict and correct in their outward conduct? Or did he also inquire into secret motives and the impulses of action? Christ acted in the most emphatic contradiction to this generally accepted rule of propriety. It is a singular fact that, in the different descriptions of the passionate attitudes of Christ, there is not a single occasion on which he is said to denounce the sinful and the vile as such. His burning holiness came in repeated contact with various forms of the most leprous uncleanness, and never burst into reproach. The publican, the adultress, the thief, and the harlot

were neither loathed nor shunned, but were either pardoned freely, or dismissed with a "Go, and sin no more." The fallen and the castaway, the devil-ridden and the detected, met with nothing but the most angelic pity from him. The fire of his wrath kindled in the presence of men of another kind.

The wages of sin is death. Sin may or may not kill the body, but surely it brings death upon the soul. The death of the soul is the disappearance of faith. Faith in the living, inworking God ceases, and gives place to dead forms and lifeless dogmas. In the actual dealings of Providence, in the character of divine men, in the power and works of God-sent Truth, there is no faith. On the contrary, evil is done in the name of religious and moral law, selfishness and falsehood are disguised, and outward professions of rigor and righteousness are made to cover a multitude of gross transgressions. What is held out as the light of heaven is nothing but the darkness of hell. Both he that holds out this false light and he that foolishly follows it are equally led to be damned. Christ, therefore, concentrates all his wrath upon the self-righteous Pharisee, the unfaithful leader of the unfaithful, who would neither enter heaven himself, nor allow others to enter. The publican and the sinner have had some sort of

justice meted out to them by public opinion, and live openly in the shame which they deserve. Even atheists and infidels profess to be no better than what they are, and are recognized as such by everybody. But the hypocrite who professes purity and practises covetousness, who prays at street corners yet breaks every rule of truth and justice when no man's eye is upon him, destroys the very rudiments of religion and morality, though his own life may show plenty of rigor and legal exactitude. And Christ, therefore, singles him out for his scathing denunciations. The fire of his tremendous indignation kindles before the presence of such men. Jesus could not tolerate hypocrisy or excuse false professions of faith. Those who assumed the externals of religion and went through pious forms, cherishing in their hearts the lusts of worldliness, and feeding those lusts upon the credulity, the ignorant piety of the poor, provoked his terrible rebuke. He heeded not their apparent power, he had no sympathy with their apparent learning and correctness of habits, he made no allowance for the extenuating influence of circumstances, but shot at them the piercing shafts of his bitter speech, and called down woe upon the whole generation of them. He could bear any amount of unholiness, because he knew faith could

cure that. But he could not bear the absence of faith, because what could be the cure of that? Specially when the absence of faith was sought to be disguised by cunning and by hypocrisy, he poured out his disapprobation in words which burnt and lacerated every one whom they touched. These denunciations very probably hastened his death: he knew that they did. But, evidently, he thought it was never too soon to expose the frightful vortex of ruin which was thinly covered over by the mouthing professions, and secret crimes of the scribes and the Pharisees. There are men in every age and country who would never become pure, nor allow others to become pure, covering their want of faith and righteousness in vain disputations and worthless sophistry, and whose one object of daily care is to see that men do not exchange sinfulness for repentance and falsehood for truth. Secretly unbelieving and hating good men in their hearts, they never lack in words of profuse admiration for the prophets and saints whom their predecessors stoned to death. Their lives excited in Jesus the heroic resolution to lay bare the rottenness, and crush the iniquity of the emissaries of Satan. It need not be doubted that these men had a good deal of conventional punctiliousness and meretricious zeal. But Christ invariably cried, "Woe

unto them!" The gentleness and sympathy of Jesus must not be confounded with weakness, timidity, and toleration of evil. He had gentle pity and forgiveness for the victims of mistake and passion; but the deliberate slaves of falsehood, faithlessness, and religious vanity are only fit for the fire and brimstone which Jesus hurled at them.

THE PHARISEES.

A religious man might most gravely propose to himself the question, What is the deadliest sin? The offences enumerated in the penal code of a nation do not necessarily indicate the right and normal scale of unrighteousness. Falsehood, for the sake of selfishness, constitutes the primal source from which all other offences, like polluted streams, flow into human society. And this falsehood, disguised in the visible paraphernalia of truth, becomes only ten times more dangerous. Christ, in rebuking sin, did not think it worth his while to denounce its outward manifestations, the deformity of which was patent before men's eyes; but he sought out the very fountain from which the minor deformities sprang. He singled out the representatives of this primitive evil. Because he cared not to denounce sin in the abstract, he chose to expose sin in its

concrete and personal form. Immorality is the natural fruit of hypocrisy. What, let me ask, can cure the mortal disease of the man who publicly professes faith and morality, but privately indulges in untruth and impurity? Christ singles out these men for his scorching rebukes. Unhappily, religion disguises mean gross worldliness in many ages and lands. There are Pharisees everywhere. Men enter into a kind of unhallowed convention to call certain forms of covetousness by the name of piety. The inspired insight of Jesus pierces into this flimsy falsehood, and identifies falsehood without giving a chance of mistake.

THE UNBELIEVING CITIES.

It seems as if there is something arbitrary in the denunciation of woe upon Chorazin and Bethsaida, because they did not repent in sackcloth and ashes. But there is no doubt that Jesus repeatedly puts emphasis on the fact that want of faith is many times more fatal than gross carnality. "It shall be more tolerable," says he, "for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven." The want of faith is a dreadful cause of evil in the world. It is the killing of one-half of human nature. It is the source

of every form of rebellion against the commandments of heaven. Few can imagine the mighty efficacy of faith in curing unhappiness and the evil of habit. To Jesus, as well as to every other godly man, this world of misery and trial is converted into paradise: it is the very secret of spiritual existence. When faith is gone, even paradise itself is turned into hell. Few can think to what desperation of criminality the best of natures can run when the protecting hand of faith is withdrawn from their motives. Faith can compensate for, or at least cure, very serious deficiencies of character. But no amount of philosophy or poetry or legal correctness of conduct can compensate for or cure the deficiency of faith. The men who profess to teach religion without the fulness and maturity of faith do deserve to be singled out as blind leaders of the blind. This absence of faith has been a common danger in all times, and specially in times of the rise of great religions. What is worse, the evil is most predominant, where it is least expected, among the priestly and privileged classes; in refined, learned, and philosophical cities. Among the unlearned and humble, infidelity is often discovered in shameless indulgences and carnal excesses. Among the literary, the clerical, and the refined, that infidelity works

its way underneath the character, produces a moral and spiritual hardness which nothing can affect, while the degrading propensities of animalism are allowed subtle satisfaction under the gilded forms of a hollow, base civilization. If guilt emerges on the surface, a so-called public opinion drives it down to the bottom again. And great cities, great men, and great governments thus rot in hidden leprosy, while the outside society is as respectable and whitewashed as possible. Good men feel the evil, but know not how to remove it. They assign one cause or another. Politics, and economics, and education are all tried in vain, till the prophet, under God's command, arises, and preaches repentance in sackcloth and ashes. The nameless vices of a false civilization are denounced under the name of infidelity. Gross sins are found to be venial in comparison with want of faith. Woe is denounced upon grand cities and systems, and Sodom is preferred before Capernaum.

THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE.

The severity of Jesus upon the rich is most unmistakable. That he should curse the rich because they are rich cannot be held for a moment. No: it was not the result of ascetic prejudice, of denominational discontent, of a shallow communistic desire

to level down social inequalities. Riches represent the outcome of the form of infidelity described above. Spiritual aspiration dies, and is buried under the superabundance of wealth. Gold makes up for the want of faith, truth, and holiness. Effort, labor, prayer, dependence, reflection, even the hopes of heaven, merge in the enjoyment of present prosperity. It is strange how individuals, nay, whole nations, have perished through the excess of wealth. Some will argue, it need not be so. But history and experience say it is so. Jesus came to deal with facts and not hypotheses. It is strange how sympathy, fellow-feeling, co-operation, and the bearing of common burdens cease under the supineness fostered by wealth. The rich have their consolation here, and are conscious that they require neither God nor immortality to awake them unto faith. Yet every moment, like others, they stand exposed to the fearful risks which their irresponsible life draws down upon them, more, perhaps, than upon the rest of mankind. They are so feared, so flattered by the people and preachers alike, that few are found to have the courage and sincerity of love to arouse them to their danger. The world feeds upon them, victimizes them, and lets them die and drop away with a hollow sigh. The warm, affec-

tionate concern of Jesus kindled at the spectacle of ruin which covetousness thus presented around him. Soft language, he felt, would not shake their slumbers. Their false complacence and unreal laughter produced in him the ecstasy of horror and pain. He uttered his cry against the slavery of wealth in words that wrung the heart, and aroused the dead. By his denunciations, wealth has often been consecrated to higher and better uses. By his rebukes, the self-sufficiency of the prosperous has been often dissipated. In a material, money-loving age, the kingdom of spirit has contracted its limits, and rules its few by a contempt of the idolatry of wealth. Well and wisely does the New Dispensation act by reviving, in its apostolical body, the vow of poverty. But need it here be pointed out that the pride, self-sufficiency, and supineness of spirit spoken of here are not exclusively confined to the abundance of earthly goods? Need it be said that the arrogance of knowledge, of power, of culture, nay, even of religiousness, produces exactly the same results? Everything that interferes with the poverty of spirit, with meekness, gentleness, and persecuted innocence, everything that tends to produce conceit, self-sufficiency, even popular approbation, draws down woe upon it. The beatitudes of the Sermon on the

Mount belong to those only who walk humbly with their God. The rich must abase themselves, and the arrogant bend their heads very low before they can enter into the straight gate that leads to the life eternal.

THE FIG-TREE.

Why did Jesus rebuke the fig-tree? Thoughtless men exult in the absurdity of the act. Yet the fig-tree that is full of leaves, and does not show a fruit upon which the wayfarer can satisfy his hunger, contains within itself a pregnant lesson. It reminds us of the metaphorical vine, how "every branch that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The vine-branch withereth, and men cast it into the fire; the fig-tree also withereth to its roots. Unfertile piety is a curse. It is a by-word for the heathen, and a hissing for the infidel. The religious man who abounds in words, as the fig-tree in leaves, who is full of doctrines and authorities, but cannot yield a practical life upon which tired wayfarers can quench their hunger and thirst, only cumbers the ground. The test of religion is in its reproductiveness. Any church that practically does no good must cause its

own removal. And any church-member who does not bring forth an abundance of good fruit must be taken away, and cast into the fire. The barrenness of speculation, the fruitless controversies often indulged in, the fine, unprofitable sermons which pulpits put forth every summer and winter, the dearth of genuine spirituality and practical usefulness in religious bodies, might very well necessitate the parable of the fig-tree. Unless our creeds fertilize the world, and our lives furnish meat and drink to mankind, the curse uttered on barrenness will descend upon us.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WEEPING CHRIST.

THE evangelist condenses the most pregnant verse of his recorded testimony into two words, "Jesus wept." Jesus is reported to have wept only four times, the first time being when he stood by the open grave of Lazarus.

Free from desire, the mother of sorrow; free from carnal affection, the cause of all misery; free from self-interest and self-glorification, why did Jesus weep? Great souls are seldom found in the act of weeping. Their tears flow inwardly, and, like the rivers of paradise, like the sap of mighty ancient trees, circulate in hidden, noiseless currents within the deep disguise of outward life. Their unseen tears, like celestial moisture, deepen the roots of their being in God, and carry their heads nearer and nearer to heaven. But no one can mark how they deepen and how they grow. Why, then, did Jesus weep? Jesus wept because Mary and Martha wept,—Mary and Martha, his beloved daughters, his handmaidens,

in whose affection and service he took delight, who had lost their only brother and guardian in Lazarus. He wept the tears of present ready sympathy and consolation, which shares sorrow, and pours upon it the balm of kindred sorrow. Jesus was the incarnation of the sweetness of self-forgetful compassion. Has any one measured the depth of the comfort and the good which an unbidden tear carries into the heart that is stricken? The eloquence of a silent tear shames the barefacedness of false comforters, turns human sympathy from a hollow civilized mockery into a blessed reality, and generates the electricity that draws heart to heart. God weeps when we weep: weeping is no weakness, it is the overflow of strong love. The divine in Jesus wept; and let not the holiest and best be ashamed to weep, if they can, with the poor and the mean. Mary and Martha, and a million Marys and Marthas, won over to faith, love, and holiness, have wept divine tears of blessed sympathy, and spread heavenly comfort after they saw that "Jesus wept." Jesus wept: he wanted whole sorrowing humanity to be his in sweet, everlasting sympathy. Jesus wept over the mangled affections of others. To heal the wounds of the bereft heart he did not scorn to weep. And so weeps he in spirit even now in the mansions

of the blest. But Jesus wept not for Mary and Martha alone, but for their brother Lazarus also. He wept not merely to condole and console, but also to save. Tears save where teachings fail. Tears give a pathos to the tone, a point to persuasion, a power to precept, and an authority to command, which make many a man, lying dead in a moral grave, rise and come forth. Great souls weep fruitful tears, and their fruit is the salvation of God's children. We could raise our dear ones, lying dead on the cold dreary bed of worldliness and sin, if we could only know how to weep faithful, prayerful, fruitful tears. Can any one imagine how many thousand Lazaruses have been raised all over the world, and called to a prolonged service of loving worship and tried purity by the image of the sweet weeping Christ, who stands at their open sepulchre, and gives thanks and glory unto God that his child, who was dead before, comes back to life again? Jesus wept, because his holy tears carried the warm current of vitality into the heart of the living and the dead, more to the dead than to the living. Let all vain, fruitless tears cease, but blessed be the spirit of the weeping Jesus.

The next time that Jesus wept was on his triumphant journey, his last journey from Bethany to

Jerusalem. The despised son of the carpenter, the poor, proscribed Galilean, found a short and sudden recognition. Success seemed unexpectedly to rest upon his cause; and Fortune, for once, smiled upon him. Though the learned, the wealthy, and the self-conscious kept out of his way, the poor, the *canaille*, the humble, greeted him, and blessed him. He never cared much for the rich and the learned. He cared for the poor. And the poor held palm leaves in their hands in token of his royalty, spread their scanty garments on the way for him to ride upon, put their rough cloaks on the colt to make his seat easy, and in a hundred other ways tried to show their warm homely fidelity and love, which the poor alone feel and show. On went Jesus; and, as he neared Jerusalem, became great, and still greater. "When he was come nigh, the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God, and thank him for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Nay, at that blessed moment, nobody seemed able to keep his peace; and it seemed as if "the very stones of the streets would cry out" in joy and exultation. Yes: it was a moment of success indeed, well-earned, long-delayed success;

and there was good cause to rejoice and shout. But, when others laughed and triumphed, he for whom there was all this gladness, *he wept*. From the top of the hill, he descended to the great city of David, he beheld Jerusalem spread like a panorama beneath him, with its temples, towers, tombs, with its gates, gardens, tanks, with its strange sacred historic associations, so thrilling to the heart of the true Hebrew, its marvellous signs of the dealings of God with man. He beheld the Jerusalem of the prophets, kings, and judges, and Zion, the daughter of God. Greeted from all sides as the Messiah, long foretold and long expected, he was about to enter that Jerusalem. Well might a flush of joy and pride light up that patient brow. But nay, not so. His cheeks became paler, his eyes were cast down, and, strange to say, he wept over the radiant city. From his lips burst out those heart-wringing unearthly words of sorrow which seem still to echo through the vast silent centuries: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings! But ye would not."

Alas! why did he weep? For whom? Why did he weep at all in the moment of joy and triumph? The present, past, and future rose before his eyes

in one tumultuous vision. He could not help remembering the brave, holy men who entered Jerusalem like him, in like circumstances,—entered to return no more. They entered Jerusalem to spread the message of righteousness and peace, came only to raise and save their country. They were despised, and stoned to death. Their noble images, their spotless lives, their burning words, their melancholy end, rose before his excited feelings as he looked at the proud city. His retrospective sympathy wept over their unmerited woe. There arose before his mind how even now the wise, wealthy, and eminent leaders of the people disowned him, watched to waylay him, and persecute him to death. Can it be he did not anticipate that amid all this outward enthusiasm and ignorant greeting, he was entering the ill-fated city for the last time, to eat his last morsel of bread with tears, perform the sad ever-memorable ceremonies, then to be caught and killed like a felon? Nay, did he not anticipate the fearful doom that overtook the land and people, that destroyed its own promise and crucified its own hope? He saw but too well the dark future of his nation; and, self-forgetful, amid the surrounding joy and exultation, Jesus wept. He wept not when they deserted him and ill-treated him, because then

he bore his share of the world's burdens, the common lot of human suffering. But, when he was fortunate, successful, exultant, his own peaceful joy unconsciously compared itself with the darkening fate of his persecutors; and, forgetting his present triumph in their future pain, Jesus wept.

If the nation had accepted and honored him, there would be some cause to sorrow for the disaster that was fast coming over it. If it had looked up to him for deliverance and kept its trust and dependence on him, there would be some cause. But the nation treated him like an outcast and an impostor, was soon going to reward his invaluable services with an ignominious death; and for *that* nation he wept. He wept with the tenderest words that could proceed from human lips, like a dying mother over her helpless babes. Those were words of strange, sympathetic patriotism, divine philanthropy, true, manly, godly sadness over the darkened destinies of the self-deluded evil-doer. The hero can weep and die for his grateful country, the philosopher can calmly lay down his life before the admiring gaze of his devoted disciples, the dying mother can plead for the clinging babe on her bosom; but can any but the sweet man of sorrows silently weep for his traitorous people at the long-delayed moment of triumph

and joy? Weep for your country, as Jesus wept; nay, weep and serve, as he did.

The third time that Jesus wept was at Gethsemane. That was a fearful weeping, indeed. "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." It was the unspeakable sorrow of parting from what one loves most. It was the immediate separation from his beloved disciples and friends,— the shepherd smitten down and the sheep scattered. Jesus had a mother, brothers, and other kinsmen, too. He was but seldom with them, if ever at all. The humble, faithful twelve were all the friends, brothers, and family that he knew. They did not know what he was to them, until he had gone; but he knew, as the time of going came near, what they were to him. They loved him with a sort of half-worldly loyalty, which forsook them at the moment of need. He did indeed love them more than his life. He had never done them harm,— ever done them good; but they did not understand it. Poor despised fishermen and wanderers as they had been, he called them by the power of his marvellous love, and converted them by that power into saints,— the honored of the honored, the leaders and ornaments of mankind. What had they done to him? By their rudeness and roughness, they offended those whom he

had wished to draw and save. By their want of faith and spirituality, they sometimes endangered his influence and misrepresented his mission. By their want of love, they often contended and fought among themselves for personal pre-eminence; and, at the time of his melancholy end, they did not dare even so much as to stand by his cross and speak a word of consolation. But, unworthy as they were, they were his all; and, as the time of separation at last drew near, he cried, saying, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." So resistless was his sorrow that he was obliged to ask them to tarry behind; and he himself went on, and fell forward on the ground with groans of indescribable agony. Alas! they did not understand it at all. They could not watch, as he had begged them to do; nor could they pray. In the listlessness of their hearts, they became drowsy, and went to sleep. They slept: he alone watched, wept, and prayed. They were heavy, slothful, and dead: he was throbbing in every nerve with an unspeakable life of sorrow, agony, and anxiety for their good. Before his body shed its precious blood, his heart shed tears of warmer and more precious blood. Asleep and gross, they did not count his tears or his groans; but he had them, every one of them, in the heart of his heart. It was

for their benefit, because he had not yet fully established them in the new religion, and the kingdom of God seemed incomplete. For their benefit and the good of the world, he wished, if possible, the cup to be taken away. It was the cup of direst hatred and deadliest wrong that man can do or suffer. But it was not taken away. He had to drink the cup to the dregs. The awful mind of God is known to him alone. In the quivering horror of the fatal issue, even Jesus himself felt a moment's perplexity. But, if the flesh felt weak in view of what was too near, the divine within soon suffused the spirit with holy calmness. Himself in pain, he wanted to administer the soothing balm to their minds, and said to them, "Let not your hearts be troubled: trust in God, trust also in me." But his own heart was troubled for them. Some might imagine he was as little affected as the rest, as thoughtless, as unconcerned. But who could know the double agony of his spirit, his agony because of the unrighteous state of the world, and because of his inevitable separation from those in whom every hope of his heart was centred in trust and affection. He wept and groaned, and prayed in faith to God for them, for those around them, and for us all, in one all-comprehensive spiritual vision;

and his sorrow heals us, and makes for righteousness to all those who believe. Do we in secret cry in his spirit for our dear ones? Do we take upon us the measure of agony which they have deserved and earned? Have we suffered such a melancholy, one-sided separation, praying for those who have never prayed for us, and suffering exceeding sorrow, even unto death, for those who are glad to leave us alone? Then, perhaps, we may understand why Christ wept at Gethsemane.

And then the last time that Jesus may be said to have wept was on the cross. "My Father, my Father, why hast *thou* forsaken me?" I emphasize the word "Thou." I contrast it with the shallow, unreal compassion of all mankind. What is not bearable, when the consciousness of a tremendous "Thou" is at our side? How can we bear anything, when the nameless consolation of that inexpressible Presence is taken away, and the whole universe emptied into desolation? Forsaken by him, we may feel crushed at any, even the most joyful, moment of life. Forsaken by him at the moment of death, we may, indeed, cry out in deep sorrow. Forsaken at the awful crisis of such a death as that of Jesus,—what unfathomable depth of trustful anguish it must have been that led him to utter that imperishable groan

recorded, as it were, in characters of blood! He has disappeared, but the wild echo of the wail seems to linger in our deepest soul, when we ourselves feel forsaken. Yea, once for all, when he had wept for every one, at last came the moment when he had a tear to weep for himself. It would not be human, not natural, were it not so. When friends forsake, and those upon whom, in life, we looked most fondly turn their faces away, when health and strength ebb out into eternity, and all the relations of the world seem like the phantoms of a feverish dream, is there not still left to us the right of looking up to our Father, and catching upon our failing hearts one all-sufficient gleam of the eternal sunshine of His face? But, alas! when everybody and everything has forsaken us, and, withal, the smiling light of God's approving spirit is eclipsed in the blackness of death, — the utter agony of afflicted humanity might well burst out in the cry, "My Father, my Father, why hast *thou* forsaken me?" Jesus weeps for his God. Let us not be ashamed to do so. He drinks the full cup of human helplessness. If he was helpless in life, was he not doubly friendless at the dread moment of his death? If he was before forsaken of man, is he not unspeakably forsaken now in his death? The

weeping Christ on the cross cries the cry of entire humanity at the absence of God. He has transmitted to us not only the divine right of weeping for our God, but weeping in our dire need at the conscious separation from our Father's Spirit. Then, truly, does the Divine Hand smite us, when he disguises his constant nearness into a dreaded distance. All complaint of man's partial loneliness is hushed before the majesty of Christ's last cry. His work apparently unfinished, with no one to take it up, with no sympathy of a superior, or even the kindred spirit of an equal to support him, with the whole world arrayed against him and his Father, with nothing to look up to but the eternal grace which was then for a moment veiled before his view, Jesus raised the cry of sorrow. Jesus wept on the cross to give us infinite encouragement, when, at times, we feel forsaken by Heaven. He was never less forsaken than at that awful moment. He died with a gentle cry of pain, which carries a strange message of comfort and peace to every one that suffered ever after in his name. His cry makes our failure success, our weakness strength, that we might behold what consolation there is in weeping for God. To solve the great problem of sorrow and pain, to prove that the worst suffering may be the

highest blessing of God, Jesus wept. To fill our inner desolation with his unspeakable sympathy, to prove to all men that to be forsaken and despised of the world is not to be forsaken of God, and that suffering means a diviner life, to reconcile us to our Father in irreconcilable danger and affliction, and out of our helplessness in death to bring forth glorious immortality, did Jesus weep. Yet his were no tears of weakness, but dominant, overflowing strength. He gave, but when did he want to receive the tribute of tears to his sorrow? One does not find it recorded that Jesus, at any time, was favored by those marks of tender sympathy. Even during the unrighteous trial, amid the heartless insults and bitter mockeries borne in serene silence, there was not a voice, not a tear, to relieve the cruelty of the unmerited wrong. But the human heart is not made of stone. Specially the nature of woman cannot bear to see unmoved such suffering as his. Therefore, when they were leading him out to die, he bending and often falling under the weight of the heavy cross he had to bear on his back, dragged, buffeted, treated with every manner of indignity,— when he was led out to die, Luke says, "there followed him a great company of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him."

Surrounded by such a scene of pitiless misery, this singular expression of sympathy did not escape his watchful observation. He immediately looked round, and beheld the weeping figures of humble women, among whom his own mother might have been. He was touched and impressed; but, instead of feeling soothed by this unexpected tribute, his emotions gathered into that gentle melancholy rebuke which broke his long silence from the judgment hall to the place of execution.

Thyself weeping for every one, say, why didst thou feel troubled when others wept for thee? Healing the sick, raising the fallen, cheering the weary, giving rest to every one, why didst thou refuse the only tear-drop they could spare for thee on that dark, dreadful day? Jesus, thou wouldst drink the flowing cup of God-given bitterness without the alloy of earthly sympathy! Because, until sorrow was complete, how could joy attain its full measure in heaven? Personality has ever been the cause of pain. By sacrificing that at the altar of sorrow, thou hast solved the permanent mystery of life, and lifted the veil that hangs on the face of the Great Unknown.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PILGRIMING CHRIST.

THE knowledge of a divine call does not necessarily mean the knowledge of a divine appointment. To feel called to the ministry is not always to find your place in the eternal hierarchy. God is one, the Church is one; but the ministers are many. The devotee longs to know what is his exact place. Particularly in the case of a great spiritual genius, the whole prophetic past and the boundless hope of the future demand that he should definitely state his position, that the world may know what to expect of him. Hence, self-knowledge, in the republic of spirit, becomes a supreme necessity. The greatest saints of our Aryan world teach self-knowledge as the stepping-stone to knowledge of God. But self-knowledge, in view of one's own place in the ministry, must be relative, depending upon the knowledge of the proper place of others. To usurp a position that rightfully belongs to another is to be expelled from the rights which belong to one's own

self. Specially in a case like that of Jesus, where the divine commission extends its relations to all the prophets of the past, to all the greatest souls of the present, and to the hope and destiny of mankind in the future, the rightful assertion of distinctive work in the progressive dispensation of God must be singularly difficult. The questions which men often asked of Jesus, he must have asked of himself. Was he Moses, was he Elias, was he Jeremias, or any of the other prophets come to life again? How was the work appointed for him related to the work of the elder dispensation? Did he come to supplant the laws and prophets? These questions were as delicate as they were momentous. Is the Christian dispensation superior or inferior to the Mosaic? If it is superior, God's great action in the past is nullified. If it is inferior, why should men forsake the better for the worse? With the object of satisfactorily answering these questions, Jesus made a spiritual pilgrimage to Moses and the prophets of old. He subjectively realized their ideals in himself. "It is this philosophy of subjectivity," Keshub says, "which underlies the pilgrimages to saints in the New Dispensation. As pilgrims, we approach the great saints, and commune with them in spirit, killing the distance of time and space. We enter into them, and they enter

into us. In our souls we cherish them, and imbibe their character and principles. If they are not personally present with us, they may be spiritually drawn into our life and character. They may be made to live and grow in us. This is a normal psychological process, to which neither science nor theology need take exception. I believe philosophers have not noticed one thing,—the absorbent character of the soul. Marvellous is its power of receptivity. It is a wonderfully impressionable substance. An hour in the company of saints is enough. The whole heart is revolutionized. All scriptures bear testimony to this blessed influence."

Jesus, then, to solve the momentous questions of his ministry, held such spiritual communion with Moses, and went on pilgrimage to Elias and the elder prophets. Heaven must descend upon earth before earth can ascend to heaven. Who can have a living faith in the resurrection and communion of the prophets but he who has seen and conversed with them? The kingdom of heaven — the future state of life — is "not lo here, lo there, but within." Enfolded within the living spirit, in the sanctified present, there lies deep that blessed life eternal. But its secrets never come into full view until the fiery emergencies of spiritual trial call them into

unmistakable prominence. Jesus called away his three most advanced and appreciative companions into the mountain solitude in night-time. There, it was his wont to pray. When all voices were hushed, all scenes were overcast, and darkness shadowed forth the Infinite, his sublime spirit sought light and counsel amid the unbroken silence. The carnal sleep, the Yogi is awake: he interrogates darkness, silence, and the unknown great. Christ called away his disciples, because his soul yearned to take and to give a great secret. Only a week before did the declaration of his sonship formally take place on the coast of Philippi. Now, naturally, various further and all-important questions arose. What was his place in the new dispensation,— in the kingdom of heaven,— which would come about before those who then stood around him passed out of life? The place of a man before the pure, all-witnessing Spirit of God, and in the estimation of those who are heavenly-minded, determines his place in the world. All true relations are eternal. Hence, it is said that heaven must descend on earth, before man, who is of the earth, can ascend to his proper place in heaven.

Jesus received all secrets of his Father's kingdom through the spirit and attitude of prayer. And,

hence, when Peter, John, and James stood with him on the mountain, he was merged in devotions. How long he remained thus absorbed is not said. But the silence of the disciples is first broken by a strange change in the appearance of Jesus. His face shone like the sun, and his garment was as white as the snow. His hidden spirituality came openly into view. A man attains the perfection of his spirituality, when his innermost prayers to heaven are consciously answered. The certainty of revelation falls upon him in full flood; and he lives the life of a spirit, while still in the human body. He sees the spirit in his heart, and others see the spirit on his countenance; and he sees the spirits in the Spirit, the glorified souls of saints and prophets in the glory of the Holy of holies. He beholds himself on the bosom of God, surrounded by the spirits of the blessed. In the beatitude of his soul, his whole appearance is changed: he is transformed, transfigured, and gone to the spirit-land of pilgrimage. The past and future dissolve in one overpowering vision of light. The great departed come, as it were, and stand on his right and on his left; and so vivid becomes the reality of his relations with them that he perceives them, converses with them, and adjusts his true

place in the kingdom of heaven. And, hence, we read that "the fashion of Christ's countenance was altered, that his raiment became white, and there talked with him two men, who were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake to him of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Henceforth, Jesus talked confidently of his relations to the two great prophets, and boldly claimed his place in the ancient theocracy.

His relative place to Elias, the prophecy about whose reappearance was a disturbing element in the organization of the holy kingdom, was settled in his own mind. His attitude to the great Mosaic dispensation was fully elucidated. And the certainty of all this revelation he enforced in the minds of his three disciples. But he withheld its communication from all others, until his death and resurrection, implied in the heavenly secret which was committed to his hands. Thus, in devotional rapture, Christ was transfigured, and saw heaven on earth. Thus, he discovered his profoundest relations to the departed and to the future generations. His place to the ancient prophets was also determined in his own consciousness. He taught with greater authority than he had ever exercised before, because he taught as one who had seen the things which he asked

people to believe. Let us remember his devotions were the fittest opportunities, when he realized the kingdom of heaven on earth, when he beheld, communed, and conversed with the holy prophets, when the momentous secrets of the divine bosom were kindled and poured into his soul. His protracted, watchful, untiring devotions were his discipline, his school, his pilgrimage, his light, and the crises of his earthly existence. Might not devotions and prayers be cultivated to lead us to all truth and holiness? Might not our devotions suffice for every perplexity, for every trial, for every deficiency? Yes, if we have the spirit which Christ had, we, too, then might converse with Jesus, as Jesus, transfigured, conversed with Moses and Elias on the mountain.

For intense seeing into God shows God in the deepest humanity. When God and humanity become united, the carnal man disappears to reappear in Him as a spirit, and He disappears from every other thing to reappear in man as divine character, then communion, or Yoga, becomes perfect. Heaven dawns upon earth when God and his prophets people its heights and depths. What are the prophets but the truest revelation of humanity, and what is God but the life and soul of the prophets? He therefore lives in heaven who lives continually in God and

his elect. The most striking instance of this is in the transfiguration of Jesus. Toiling up the high mountain for his wonderful devotions, he often parted from his disciples and prayed alone. The lofty solitude of his soul made sometimes human companionship simply impossible. So he left them, and merged in spiritual absorption. On the present occasion, however, it was different. They were near when he lapsed into his devotions. They observed him. And his intense communion in their simple eyes of faith seemed to impart a strange alteration to his outward appearance. He became refined, pure, heavenly, white as snow. Nothing could be more translucent than the absorbed, idealized figure, the spirit merged in Spirit, the whole body suffused and shining with the effulgence of the communion. During these rare conditions, the invisible becomes visible, and we, as it were, behold the soul. But in Christ's case it was still more marvellous. He was talking with persons who were not on earth, but in heaven. Conversation is impossible, unless those who talk stand in each other's presence. Elias and Moses were in the presence of Jesus. Not only was the outward appearance of Jesus heavenly, but he was *in* heaven, conversing with those who live in paradise. He had gone to the

mountain-top, as his wont was, to seek and commune with the spirit of God alone. But, in finding God, he found also the spirits of his glorious prophets. Through the Spirit, he made his entrance into the spirit world, and conversed with those whose mission on earth was associated, if not identified, with his own. Did he see ghosts, immaterial apparitions, about which visionaries speak? Far from it. The whole thing was profoundly spiritual. He saw the vivid ideals of his great predecessors embosomed in the depths of God with whom he communed. Divinity symbolized itself in the clearest vision of the character and mission of Moses and Elias. And Jesus perceived the relations of his work with that of those who had come and gone before him as harbingers of the kingdom of heaven. He verified and confirmed his previous estimates and ideals at that blessed season of transfiguration, when he beheld everything in the light of the manifested Spirit alone. And, henceforward, he spoke with authority about Elias and Moses. When they questioned him about the coming of Elias and the restoration of all things, he answered forcibly, "I say unto you Elias is come." Moses and Elias had indeed come. They were in Christ's blood and breath. They were in Christ's heart, ideal, character, and work. He living

in God and his prophets, the kingdom was within him. He had made the pilgrimage, he had labored up the holy mountain of God, he was immersed in the Spirit, and the things of the Spirit. His whole nature, his figure, and his raiment whitened and glistened with that inner heavenliness which carried him into the Paradise of divine presence, and through divinity into the communion of the spirits of the blessed, who unfolded to him the marvellous mysteries of the better land. This is the true pilgrimage. And well might Peter say, "Master, it is good for us to be here and build tabernacles."

But what was the result of it all? Let us see what relations the pilgriming Christ discovers between the dispensation of Moses and his own. He said "he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." What then was the character of that fulfilment? He developed it, widened it, made it more universally applicable.

"There is such a thing as the evolution of the divine purpose in the order and history of religion. There is a logical sequence in the dispensations of faith. All these dispensations are connected with each other in the economy of Providence. They are linked together in one continuous chain, which may be traced to the earliest age. They are a con-

catenated series of ideas which show a systematic evolution of thought and of religious life. Popular opinion, however, on this subject, has always run in a contrary direction. Men have not seen, and therefore they are ready to ignore and deny the connecting link between the several dispensations. The New Dispensation has discovered the missing link. In Jesus, we see the logical sequence of Moses. The New Testament is the necessary logical sequence of the Old. Faith sees Christ in Moses. Logic looks upon Christ as the logical sequence of Moses. The Jew of the New Testament is the Jew of the Old Testament developed and matured. Moses is the prefiguration of Jesus. Jesus is Moses perfected. Moses taught stern justice, and inaugurated the kingdom of law. Jesus taught love, and established the kingdom of grace. The theology of love is the logical complement of the theology of fear. The dispensation of grace is the necessary logical result of the dispensation of justice. The two form one integral gospel, and are indissolubly connected. Can you separate Moses from Jesus? You cannot. Come then, Moses and Christ, hand in hand. Hail Moses, Christ, unity in duality! In blessed union forever knit together, who can disunite you?"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRUSTING CHRIST.

CONTEMPLATE the singular relations which Jesus had to "little children." The scene in which he rebuked his forbidding disciples because they did not suffer innocent children to approach him has formed the subject of the highest art and spirituality. His allusions to babes and sucklings, to lambs and little ones, were exceedingly frequent. Jesus had in him a child nature which repeatedly found intense response in lilies, lambs, and "little children." He said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." What is there in the nature of loving infants that bears a special affinity to the kingdom of heaven? Is it the guileless innocence unsusceptible of temptation? Is it the mysterious tenderness whose only language is the smile and the tear? Is it the simplicity that insures the highest freedom? It may be all this, but it is certainly something more. The deepest attitude of childhood is its trustfulness. The inexperienced and unknow-

ing innocence of infancy is inimitable in age. The freedom, the tenderness, the simplicity of the babe, can be more admired than adopted. But Jesus has proved that we can trust like the child. Christ's tenderness, it has been said before, was like that of the woman. His courage and strength were like those of the hero. His holiness has set the standard of all human morality and pureness of motive. But his trustfulness was that of the child. The first thing which you mark in a child's trust in its parents is the absence of anxiety. Perfect trust casts out anxiety. The child reposes on the bosom of its mother like a pilgrim in some immortal shrine, like a ship-wrecked traveller in some indestructible ark, who, while a mad sea is raging around, feels safe and strangely assured. The only cause of danger and anxiety is when the mother is not near. The fox has its hole and the bird its sheltering branch, but the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. Yet no one denounced anxiety and care for the morrow in stronger words than did the Son of Man. His childlike trustfulness laid all anxiety to sleep. Jesus felt it was enough for him to look up to God and rest. Was any one's life-work undertaken amid circumstances more hopeless than his? Had any one ever had greater occasion for anxiety than he?

But his trustfulness brought with it the calm of quietness and peace. For, with him, faith meant certainty, and to trust was to repose on the Father's bosom. Another thing was the absence of fear in Christ's character. Wherever the child fears, he cannot love ; where he loves, he does not fear. Hence, his attachment to his mother is more than to his father, because in his relation to the latter there is sometimes the element of fear. The Hindu never stops by calling his God his father : he always softens divinity in motherhood. Jesus was fearless not in the sense of Elias and John. It was not the ferocity of wild asceticism. It was the perfect fearlessness of loving trust. Fear is the child of disobedience, and the father of falsehood. The faith of Jesus was never tainted with the consciousness of transgression, and therefore it expelled all fear. It was perfectly royal in its freedom and self-assurance. Nothing was impossible to it. Jesus feared not to cure disease, to forgive sin, and to break convention. He feared neither priest, prince, nor proconsul, because he had the strength of trust. Power, position, and wealth had as little effect upon him as upon the unweaned child clinging to its mother's neck. Even the fear of death, that comes to all, came not to him.

Childhood never despairs. Hope is born of child-

like trust, hope is fed by trust. None can hope as the child can. Despair is born of hardness of heart. The hopefulness of Christ's faith penetrated the very veil of death. But no hopes of the good things of this world flattered the heart of Jesus. True trust never rears its hopes on earthly vanity. Christ hoped for all things heavenly. Faith builds its hope on the eternal hereafter. The trusting Christ launches on the bark of hope into the dark, unknown future. He can hopefully face a cold, cruel nation, he can defy all the persecution, hate, and infidelity of the present, and work for the benefit of a certain future. Suffering loses its smart before genuine trust. Trust proves its strength in suffering. Every one suffers, but the trusting son of God understands and honors suffering. The perfection of faith is at the moment of death. True trust is struck by suffering as the great tree of the forest by the storm, to be tossed, torn, and settled deeper in everlasting strength. Suffering and trust ever go together: the suffering is for a little while, while the trust is transformed into eternal joy. Can submission ever go to a greater extremity than in Jesus? He submitted, because he trusted. He submitted, because in faith he beheld a will higher than his own. To that will he sacrificed himself.

Every one has got to sacrifice to something. Blessed he who can submit in trust to the true will of God. Blessed he who has discovered the will of God to be different from his own, and trustfully submitted to it.

Trust, as a faculty of the soul, passes almost without recognition. Yet, in spiritual life, it is a cardinal, vital power. It is not a mere feeling. Though its relations to all warmth of sentiment be very deep, it is a positive organ of strength. The solidity, the objective magnitude of truth, is never realized except through trust. The kingdom which Christ came to establish, and which, in its material form, was simply nowhere, existed in its stern objectivity in the domain of his trust. Nay, where is God; where is the celestial, immortal soul; where is future eternal life, but in the vision of trust? Yet it is strange that men will put their trust in fallible historical records of the past, in legendary imaginative revelations, but have no faith in the tremendous realities that beset them. Christ saw things through trust: we see things through the intellect. Faith beholds being, while intellect beholds mere relations. Relations are continually changing. Being remains unchanged. Opinions are unstable: trust is eternal. Eternal verities, therefore, are comprehen-

sible through faith. Who can measure the strength of truth? It reaches farther than the ages: it moves and makes the world. The strength of truth is the strength of the man who puts his trust in that truth. There is occasion, therefore, that, in the midst of all our philosophy and material comfort, we should revive in ourselves the lost inspiration of the faculty of trust. Trust God, trust man: it will only strengthen you, and do you good.

Trust is the test of love. A sure and infallible test it is, because divine love is very different in its processes from human love. Divine love tries us, pains us, punishes us, throws us into the midst of inexplicable perplexities. How few men can retain the sweetness and fulness of their trust amid the small, vulgar harassments of life; and how fewer still amid great and unprecedented disasters! Trust helps love, and love helps trust; trust without love may sustain us, but love without trust is a mockery. Nay, the two abide together, and are different names given to different sides of the same mental attitude. This trust is the key to all deep wisdom. It opens a wonderful insight into all that is excellent in man's life and soul. It gives new eyes and new ears to the faithful disciple. It gives new enthusiasm and unseals hidden life to the

genuine devotee. In the wreck of bodily powers, in the dissolution of social attachments, it is true trust that finds out the difference between what is transient and permanent. The sure indication of a higher and better life is this faculty of trust, because evidence fails us here, and demonstration it is foolish to expect. After the example of Christ, therefore, it becomes every one of us to acquire the strength of trust, and treasure up its wisdom. It becomes us to temper our love with trust, to test our devotions with trust, and make faith the everlasting ground of our religion and our hope.

But there is more benefit in the principle of trust than all this. It is the strength of patience and peace. When Christ promised his peace to his disciples, he presupposed in them the condition of trust. Is there any misery comparable to that of self-consuming anxiety? And are not the troubled waters of care laid at rest by the touch of inner trust? The genuineness of religious life must be measured by the permanent peace it affords. And no peace is possible but through well-founded trust. The fiery passions — such as anger, hatred, and revenge — are quenched by the serene calmness of trust. The war of motives is reconciled by its wisdom. The strange inequalities and apparent con-

tradictions of life are allayed and explained by power of trust. Dangers, uncertainties, injustices, asperities, all lose their might to afflict the man who looks to the future in lofty, God-illumined trust. There is neither religion nor philosophy, neither social nor domestic life, neither bodily health nor motion, neither mental security nor comfort, without conscious and unconscious trust. We trust men with our life and property, without inquiring for a moment into their character. We trust ourselves and our dear ones to laws and organizations, knowing them to be faulty or wicked. We even trust in irrational natural forces, and brute beasts to work our purposes, and our welfare. The law of trust permeates every part of the creation. How is it, then, that we hesitate or unwillingly consent to trust in the love of that God who has made his creatures mutually trustful and dependent on each other?

And, lastly, if we have to offer, we have also to receive a solemn trust. Jesus trusted because he received a trust. The trust with which he was commissioned was to set forth, and leave behind him the example of true sonship. That sonship is many-sided. Each one of us who professes allegiance to him reflects a feature of it. Each is a limit and member of that perfect, corporate sonship. And

each is bound to receive and discharge his own fragment of trust, that the Church may complete its organization, and shine before the world. He who feels this grave trust reposing on him dares not trifle with it, and finds he has not a moment to lose. Vain contentions, and rivalries for power cease when men become conscious of the trust God reposes on them. Life is too short, and opportunities come but too rarely, to discharge it satisfactorily. How can we keep our trust but by trusting? Every great work is endless: we can never accomplish it perfectly. And the Son of God, when called away, found the world far away from the kingdom of heaven he came to establish. For what he accomplished, he glorified God; for what he could not accomplish, he looked up in trust to the Holy Spirit to accomplish when he was gone. Yet, all the time he was allowed to walk on the earth, he spared no energy, and wasted no time in carrying out to the fullest extent the great work trusted to him. The most active, practical, painstaking life was the life of the trusting Christ. And thus true trust is discharged in work and suffering unto death.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HEALING CHRIST.

THE miracles of healing which Jesus performed necessarily resulted from the concentration of his sympathy. He felt so intensely for the ailments, both bodily and spiritual, of those who helplessly courted his aid to cure them, that the necessity of rescuing these sufferers forced itself upon his loving nature. It may be that Jesus, like any other rabbi of his time, knew the rudiments of the healing art. But even the highest medical skill of those days could not cope with the strange maladies which the Son of God so effectually healed.

Coming to speak of Christ as the healer, it naturally occurs to one to meditate on the nature of sympathy as efficacious for the cure of sin. What healing is comparable to the healing of the wounds of character? The worst sins are cured, if the evil-doer can find sympathy with the divine attributes of the physician of souls. If Christ cured physical ailments now and then, how often did he cure the

blindness, leprosy, and death of the spirit? His reputation comes down to the generations of mankind, not because he cured Peter's wife's mother, but because he sought and saved the fallen. The secret of that atoning power lay in his instinct of being able to feel with the worst of men and women. Their guilt of moral disease, their shame, remorse, and ruin touched a mysterious chord in his beautiful nature, and produced the most intense agony. Why is it that holiness should be agonized at unholiness? We cannot say why it is; but it is an undoubted fact that the purest and best among mankind have wandered about in sorrow for the deserved sufferings of the vile and outcast. It was so with Chaitanya of Nuddea, the prophet of love, who wept aloud at "the condition of the creature." It was so with Siddhartha, whose tender humanity refused the blessings of Nirvana, when so many fellow-beings were in the misery of carnal Desire. And unspeakably more so was it in the case of "the Man of Sorrows." When the perpetrators of iniquity, used to receive the sanction of kindred guilt, or the stolid apathy of society at large, or, worse still, the cruel, unrelenting penalties of human law and justice, suddenly come to face the unfamiliar fact of affectionate holiness agonized at the spectacle of their guilt, they are amazed

with a strange experience. The shock of that experience calls out the best that is left in them. It not unfrequently converts them. In the midst of his own peace and blessedness, the Son of God is crucified on the cross of others' guilt. He suffers sorrow which others have deserved. Those who realize *that* feel mysteriously affected — nay, they cannot but feel renovated and healed — at the thought. Oh that we could feel that the spirit of Infinite Goodness, incarnated in the best and purest among ourselves, profoundly grieves at our downfall and misery! Oh that we could feel Christ weeps and intercedes for us in heaven; that other Christs living in the world, in whom the healing Jesus has found a resurrection, mourn for our misdeeds, and wait for our return! Atonement is the perfection of sympathy. Regeneration is the success of aggressive, aggrieved, conquering love. The authorized healer is a man of mesmeric genius. Others' ailments touch him with vicarious suffering. His power touches others with curative, quickening, reviving grace. It is the magic circle of fellow-feeling. It is the diffusive, incomprehensible power of blessing others. It is the binding force of the Church, and the fraternity. Let men awaken to sympathy, and they will convert the world. Let men awaken to love, and they will heal mankind.

The power of physical healing by pure, tender sympathy, by warm, active, impulsive, self-forgetful faith, is discounted in these days of gross material medication. But, in point of fact, true spiritual ministry has a remedial value both to the mind and body. We have often delighted in the thought of the holy preceptor who is skilled in the art of healing both the heart diseased and the aching weary flesh. Is it not a fact that the groaning of the soul often utters itself in physical pain and prostration, and the afflicted flesh recoils upon the vitality of the inner man? Is it not a fact of our own experience that a pure, heavenly draught of heart-felt devotion has quenched the fire of a rising fever, and relieved the agony of disease? Yea, even death itself is disarmed of its fear and sting at the name of the heavenly Healer. Such healing is not violation of the laws of nature, but only deeper and truer conformity to those laws. We can assure the true believer that there is *not* that hostility between the laws of the spirit and the body which the faithless votaries of the one, or the other, would mislead us to imagine. Were we really true to the spirit, we cannot but be true to the bodily life which the Father of spirits has himself given us. And hence, in former days, and in these days also, men who conquered their own minds

conquered their flesh also, and in conquering their flesh triumphed over the whole world. They healed the hearts and bodily sufferings of those that trusted in them. In their presence all soreness and pain were forgotten. The holiness of their look or touch transformed the humble, the trustful, whose own faith cured them. What talisman was there in the look or the touch? No carnal, magical, miracle-working power certainly, but the power of divine, sympathetic humanity, an absorption in the suffering of the sufferer through self-forgetful inexpressible tenderness. Alas! it seems that has gone out of the world altogether. But it has not gone out completely. The healing miracles of divine sympathy and holy tenderness will have to be worked again.

There is a sect of Christians who ascribe all tender healing to Mary, the universal mother. They thus unconsciously hold the double nature, the fatherly and motherly nature of the Christian divinity. We believe in a Mother God, we believe in womanly as in manly incarnation. To us, certainly, their doctrine is not very foreign. But what we contend for is that, as in God, so in Christ, so in every holy man called to the ministry, there is both a masculine and a feminine element. The complete-

ness of all religious character lies in the proportion in which the two elements are combined. It is the woman in us that touches the woman. The most loving of Hindu deities is invested with a face of feminine grace. The "twofold image" of the Vaishnava is the ideal complement of manly and womanly affection. Where Christ is identified with the masculine perfections of faith, holiness, and truth, as in Protestantism, religion takes a harsh, abstract, combative aspect. Where all the saving virtues of sympathy and love are attributed to the Madonna, practical and personal homage is transferred to the woman deity; and the soothing functions of the Son of Man all but cease. But, when we discover both the paternal and maternal in God, and proportionately in all his true incarnations, we derive a double advantage from religion, besides being faithful both to the moral and emotional in man.

The function of woman as a healer, as a nurse, has in all ages been recognized. But the mission of woman to teach man the divine grace of sympathy has not been so readily recognized. Instead of our learning from her the arts of healing affection, we are trying to teach her to imitate our hard, masculine, muscular qualities. I would not object to teaching woman our firmness and courage, if we were

allowed to learn from her how to heal care, pain, and sorrow. When the man learns to cease to be masculine in the presence of woman, but becomes womanly in the beatitude of tender, refined sympathy, then he can cure the sufferings of all humanity. It is curious, however, that in Christian art all angelic forms are represented as more feminine than masculine. And still so strong is popular prejudice that every mention of God as the Supreme Mother is regarded as improper. The virtues ascribed to Mary, the mother, the healer, the merciful, the sympathetic, indicate that Jesus had other relations to society than are generally recognized. Let, therefore, Mary merge in Christ. Let woman and man combine to make the perfection of manhood. For all genuine ministry is twofold. It seeks not only the spiritual, but the personal and bodily welfare of the disciples. The ministry of healing is often set aside, or finds a formal recognition. In its absence, genuine interest in the flock becomes deficient, and spiritual ministration lacks in reality and power. A distance grows up between the shepherd and his flock. Perfect confidence is seldom established. The pulpit deals in respectabilities which answer no true want. The pew pays its rate, and considers its duty ended. Where is the healing

of body and mind? Where is the balm of comfort, the touch of sympathy, and the cure of soul for which the poor looked up to Christ?

Call it mother, call it woman, call it Christ, or call it Mary, it is nothing more than the ineffable sympathy and tenderness of the nature of the Son of Man. That is the secret of all healing. By far the greatest portion of Christ's recorded miracles relate to healing. And, what is strange, the Healer bids the healed to go, and tell no man of his cure. It is possible he knew men enough to suspect that these cures, if reported, would excite profane curiosity, and ignorant superstition, much more than faith in the power of divine humanity. If so, then, alas! those wise, modest precautions have proved very nearly fruitless. Men have exalted the physical miraculousness over the holy, humane sympathy. And, hence, though they have gained in the power of credulity, which has both its good and its bad sides, they have not gained in the power to cure. The real healing of the miracles has been lost, and their husks only remain. Now, in these days, the science of medicine has so far improved as to be able to work miracles of cure without the aid of religion. We wish heartily the unexplored and really vast powers of religious faith should be combined with medical

wisdom. But, before such a blessed combination actually takes place, must religion give up the holy ministry of healing altogether? No: let us in seasons of sickness and suffering bring to bear the power of our devotions and faith upon our weakened flesh. Let us exchange the divine remedy of mutual sympathy, and brotherly tenderness. There is before us the assurance, if this does not completely cure us of our bodily ailments, it will at least cure us of the much deeper and more inveterate ailments which afflict the heart and conscience. For, verily, there is much more wonderful miracle in the cure of the sinful, lustful nature, dead and buried in unholiness, than in the cure of bodily suffering from a temporary suspension of bodily power.

CHAPTER X.

THE FEASTING CHRIST.

REFLECT upon the pathos of Christ calling himself "the bridegroom." One feels disposed to exclaim that he married sorrow and suffering. But no, there was deep enjoyment in his simple life; and, what is more, this enjoyment was not only of things celestial and spiritual, but also of the blessed beneficences of God in this our common earthly life. The dew and the sunshine, the seed times and the harvests, the fields, pastures, flocks, and flowers were to him a perpetual festival. His eyes dwelt, and wandered in the midst of them, his ears drank their music, his heart feasted upon their poetry, his imagination extracted sweet, everlasting metaphors from them. Who knows how many times he might have sung internally, or burst forth in the Psalmist's utterances: "Thou hast established the borders of the earth; thou hast made winter and summer. Thou crownest the year with goodness, and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the

pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks, and the valleys also are covered with corn. They shout for joy, they also sing. Behold the sons of men go forth to their labor, and the field yieldeth food for them and their children. They reap every one of them from his cornfield; they gather every one his vintage from the vineyard."

Christ was the child of nature. His spirit had the poetic, pastoral genius of the primitive Hebrew. He spent his nights with the silent stars on the mountain top, he preached on the shingly margin of the Galilean lake, he spake from the blue ripples of its breezy surface. Nature was his bridal chamber, and Christ was the bridegroom! He worshipped, he meditated, he found his occupation, and his simple joy, walked, stood, or sat amid the bounties and solitudes of nature. There is for every one a festive converse with the silent eloquence of this mysterious universe. There is a joyous suggestion in sky and air. For the exiled and outcast there is a benediction in the calmness of morning, and evening twilight. Every landscape over plain and mountain is an everlasting possession to the eye purged from covetousness. Every song of bird, breeze, or man is a feast to the

Son of God: all wealth of pure laughter and innocent merriment is undoubtedly his. He is happy with the rich, happy with the poor, happy with the saint, and happy with the child. Christ is joyous as the bridegroom.

Did not the saints and sages hold high festival with nature in all lands and nations? Forest, hillside, river-bank, were haunted and sacred to them. Midnight was the time of profound devotions. Men have disenchanted nature of the magic of primeval spirituality. They repair to the woods to shoot the singing birds, or to kill them for their plumage. They desecrate the river-banks to hook and net the finny tribe. Or, if they are very solemnly inclined, the chain, compass, and sextant are the implements of their worship. Nature is submerged in mathematics. Measurement and exactitude swallow all emotion. The fields have no festival, the sky has no consolation. Let the spirit of the feasting Christ once more draw us outside ourselves, to rejoice in the plenitudes of beauty and grace in the world. Let the presence of God be rehabilitated in the throne of the universe.

"They come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?" This must have been a serious

difficulty to the minds of many honest observers of the new message. Every dawning dispensation of religious truth is apt to be judged by old standards. Fasting and asceticism have been the two recognized tests of spiritual accomplishment in the East. One cause why the New Dispensation of the Brahmo Somaj has not found as ready acceptance in India as we could wish, is that we refuse to conform to the old rules of orthodox piety; namely, ascetic hermitage and retirement from all household practical life. That Christ accepted the spirit of fasting and asceticism who can doubt? The forty days' fast is one of the most significant chapters of his life. But Christ's asceticism and fasting were of entirely a new order. It was self-renunciation for others' good. It was rigid abstinence amid the abundance of outward resources. It was a fast in feasting. It was the universal law of temperance and self-deprivation which all men are bound to practise. The Johannic and the Mosaic dispensation was for saints, for men who made a pretension to prophetic character, for the priestly order. Christ's dispensation was to call sinners to repentance. The spirit was new, and the form required to be new. It would not do for him to embody the law of chaste moderation in the rigidity of Phar-

isaic observances. "No man seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment; else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled." The new spirit of practical piety then, which Christ came to embody, demanded a new form; and that form manifested itself not only in orthodox fasts, but in occasional religious feasting.

The East excels in the number and grandeur of its feastings. Full one-half of the most ancient of the Vedas is dedicated to the laws and methods of regulating the consecrated festivals. It is the refreshment and refilling of body and mind. Feasting is symbolical of human brotherhood. The rich and the humble, the wise and the illiterate, forget the inequalities of circumstance when they sit side by side in the holy festival. The accursed custom of caste is found, even in the most liberal lands and nations, to tear asunder the relations of natural brotherhood. Who can say how much of the social and moral asperity between class and class could be allayed, how much solid practical reformation effected, if the mighty and the noble would deign to sit at a common feast with the low and the unfortunate?

But the old Pharisaic pride intervenes. Feasting is select and exclusive. And, if any man of Christlike love and condescension mixes with the down-trodden poor, the charge is at once laid against him that "he eats and drinks with the publicans and sinners." But Christ knew the profound meaning of a common feast.

The commonness of enjoyment is the secret of brotherly love. Feasting is a small thing, but no great religious community has ever got on without a common meal. We cannot be fed upon rebukes, sermons, and tears always. Christ rebuked, he taught, he wept; but he ate and drank with those whom he taught and rebuked. There is more moral and spiritual efficacy in a hearty meal partaken together in simple affection than in mighty conclaves and controversies. Cut away from the sacraments of society, hated and renounced by the sanctimonious Brahmins of hollow Orthodoxy, herding together in vulgar occupations, there stood the publicans, as the sudras stand in India. The Son of Man felt that he "came not to call the righteous," but to seek and save the lost. Is it possible he did not reflect on the marvellous effect his heartfelt sympathy would produce, when, passing by, he saw the publican sitting at the receipt of custom,

and, in the excess of his gracious love, whispered to him, "Follow me"? What was the feeling of the poor pariah, when the holy, young, mysterious Rabbi, whom multitudes adored, whom John, the prophet, himself honored, in whom the nation looked forward for the manifestation of the promised Messiah, accosted him,—nay, not only so, but went to his house, and sat to partake of the unconsecrated meal? The amazement of the privileged hierarchs was not greater than that of the downtrodden outcasts who flocked to sit around him. In that feasting at Levi's house, he won the poor and alienated the priests forever. It showed his status and mission: it established his community. In that act of feasting, the Christian Church became the Church of the poor raised up, and of sinners saved. It separated itself forever from the self-righteous, the proud, the unspiritual. It would be well if Christian missionaries in foreign lands would eat the bread of the people whom they go to convert, eat it from a common table, eat it in the unrefined, humble ways of the people, as Christ ate at the festive board of the publicans. I know Roman Catholic missionaries have done so, and won the hearts of whole tribes of men. Let all classes of men, high and low, be occasionally invited in the name of re-

ligion to partake of a sacred meal, and let the festivity be a medium to spread the holiness, faith, and love of the best, and permeate the assembly.

Feasting is the gift of God. The feast which nature prepares for all sentient beings comes from the preparation of a bountiful providence. And human feasting, in oriental countries, is God-appointed. Christ's model prayer is for the gift of the daily bread. And, when that bread came, he did not take it contemptuously, or as a matter of course, but with gratitude and rejoicing, as a feast prepared for him in the wilderness. The simplicity of faith delights in every good thing which the Father gives, though it never demands or expects any. When meat, or drink, or raiment comes, it fills the soul with childlike gladness. While the prosperous pine in imagined languors, while the miser decays in anxious penury, and the lavish and luxurious feel cloyed in satiety, Christ holds his daily festivals over his humble bread, and gives thanksgivings from the singleness of his heart.

The feasting Christ incarnates the spirit in which the well-regulated bounties of Providence are to be received. Fast days and Sabbath days make no difference to him, when the spirit of loyalty to God's commandments is within. And, when his disciples

are accused of breaking divine ordinance in the matter of food, he excuses them by saying that even David himself ate the shew-bread. The evil disposed and slanderous charged him with gross laxity; but he came not to destroy human nature, but to exalt and consecrate it. He uttered his dreadful rebukes against the fulness, the laughter, and the wealth of the world; but he boldly proclaimed the justification of his disciples, when they gave up fasting, in the festive parable of the bride chamber. "As long as they have the bridegroom, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast in those days." There are times when feasting is as good as fasting. Times there are when feasting is better than fasting. Because abstinence and enjoyment come alike from God. Both bring their inspiration, both answer great purposes. Thus, Christ feasted and fasted every day.

Domestic festivals, such as marriages, births, and various other auspicious occasions, are blessed occasions of union and congratulation in the East. Religion fastens itself on them. False enthusiasts and heartless fanatics decry them. These centres of household and social fellowship form a great part of religion in common life. Unnatural

religion and harsh formalism discourage them. But the humanity and sweet sense of Christ knew their value. He not only presented himself at the marriage celebration, but contributed to increase the festivity of the occasion. He fostered the spirit of ceremonial observances within rational and due limits. The great tendency of our times is to destroy the rituals of religion, and multiply the ceremonies of eating, drinking, and making merry with the other sex. The household has no opportunity to order its preparations for the moral and spiritual welfare of its inmates. Dinner parties, dancing parties, and the uncounted frivolities of a sensual civilization are allowed to drive the solemnities of home and religion out of recognition. The holy man is honored in the Eastern household to pronounce his blessing on auspicious occasions. The scene of marriage is fragrant with the incense and flowers dedicated to religion. And, if the spirit of Christ with his disciples should descend to the domestic hearth while we are celebrating our simple festivals, will it not be the addition of joy to joy?

Nor is that all. Jesus felt he was to be with his disciples but for a short time. United to them with all the associations of prayer, fasting, meditation, and counsel, his loving nature longed to be

associated with them in those earthly scenes which make the relations of this world so sweet and memorable. In the commonest acts of life, very profound relations are often perpetuated. The preceptor, who can interweave his influences with the daily routine of existence, has seldom any chance to be forgotten. Jesus shared his meat and drink, his occupations and recreations, with his humble associates. To observe him, to imitate him, was the best means of consecrating their existence. Christ loved to eat and drink with his disciples, to teach them the rules of enjoyment and abstinence. He desired to be remembered in their meals, when their minds found relaxation and rest after the arduous labors of the day. He taught them the great duty of thanksgiving at their meals. It was the joyous and simple communion of the poor. It was the sacrament of every-day life. It was that by which he knew he would have the liveliest hold upon their minds. If he was glad to enjoy his meals with his beloved, he was glad to give feasts and feed thousands with the commonest fare. His feeding them with the bread of the body was typical of feeding them with a more celestial fare. But this usage of oriental saints to feed large numbers of people out of their scanty resources is universal. The poor who are fed never reflect on the quality

of the fare, but feel sanctified to eat of the bounty of the holy man. Who knows but, in the case of Christ, the five thousand were not exalted by saving truths to support their souls also? Who knows how he symbolized that great feast? Perhaps among us just now there is no want of feasting. But there is great want of converting the feast of the flesh into the flow of soul. Festivals require to be symbolized. Eating and drinking demand to be divested of their gross carnal meaning. Feasts do not exalt us, but make us heavy and drag us down to drowsy idleness. The feasting Christ has typified his spirit in the holy meal perpetuated by him in the world. Does not the communion table in every Christian church bear conclusive testimony to that? Bread and wine signify objects very different from what they themselves are. While at the feast Christ ate, he ate spiritual food, ate of the eternal word which was incarnated in him; while he drank, he drank of the enthusiasm of love, the kindling flame of high and holy impulses, which made him burn through the brief period of his life, like a celestial light whose orbit was in some higher sphere than this our earthly sky. All feast to him was the feast of soul. The outer festival only foreshadowed the inner intoxication of joy.

What free spontaneity must there have been for those beloved early disciples to feel festive glory in the presence of Christ! Set free from the harsh, narrow despotism of the Pharisees, from the bonds of sin and remorse, from the cares and anxieties of worldly life, their burdens borne by the Master's mysterious power, their yoke made light by sweet love to him, partaking to their hearts' content of his holiness, peace, and wisdom, they are full of frolic and festivity, even on the Sabbath day. The envious priests were ill-pleased with all this delight, and clothed their complaint in sanctimonious disguise. Jesus saw the present and the future,—the heedless, joyous present of his trustful apostles, their future sadness and martyrdom. It gave him a melancholy satisfaction, like the glow of a winter sunset. He wanted them to rejoice as long as they could, as long as he was with them. He heightened and chastened their rejoicing, and crowned their feast by adding to it his profound gladness. Was not the ministry full of anxieties and sorrows? Was not the labor, with its fatigues, great? Were not the poverty, the privations it brought, the discipline, the asceticism, heavy to be borne? If the grace of the Father occasionally granted intervals of respite, the disciples and the Master joined in holy

festival. Darker days were coming apace. Clouds were rising on the horizon. The time of heart-rending separation loomed in the near prospect. Death beckoned to the Son of Man to prepare betimes. And, then, did he not foresee the bread of the disciples would be their irremediable sorrows, and their drink would be their own tears, that they must weep and watch as he did, till, like him, they passed away into his glory? While the brief day of mutual union lasted, therefore, he grudged them not a few intervals of freedom and mirth. It was like the mutual felicitation of a household on the eve of a final parting,— the evening songs of birds met on the tree at sunset, to depart, each to a separate destiny, at the early dawn. Yes, there is a melancholy grandeur in the feasting Christ before he mounted the throne of his cross. There is a sweet, mellow lustre about that heavenly bridegroom rejoicing with his simple children of the bridal chamber. As infancy and early youth prepare us for the troubles and trials of manhood, as the festivities of the marriage day prepare us for the sorrows and responsibilities of the household, and life anoints us for death, so Christ feasted with his disciples, that they might be ready for the days when the bridegroom should have gone away, and the children of the bridal chamber should have to mourn in fasting and patience.

Let us then not be ashamed of our festivals. Let us solemnly celebrate, with rites and ceremonies, our seasons of joyous event. If the weeping Christ has taught us the service of sorrow, the feasting Christ has taught us the service of rejoicing and gratitude. If the Man of Sorrows found, in this hard world, his bridal chamber, and was joyous like a bridegroom, eating and drinking, giving meat and drink to others, why should we, with our more numerous enjoyments, mourn to manifest our ingratitude? The feasting Christ is a unique figure, side by side with his other, and more tragical attitudes. But Christ would not be coextensive with human nature, if he did not combine fasts and feasts in that many-sided discipline which gives perfection to the diverse faculties of man's heart.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PARTING CHRIST.

IF any one wishes to behold a relation of strange love dissolving into the sad sunset of a celestial farewell,—a farewell in which what was best, deepest, purest, sweetest in the soul was poured out, as never before nor since,—let him turn to the parting Christ. There, on the serene and woody summit of Olivet, in the humble house of Simon the leper, Jesus sat calmly contemplating his death, the time for which had now come in solemn certainty, and was to take place in two days more. He has just finished the clear awful warning to his disciples of the approach of the end. The echo of those words—"Take heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is"—was still ringing in their bewildered ears, and the Master was merged in the depth of his own forecast. In contrast to all this, the sacred city of Jerusalem, which lay down below on the slopes of that very hill, with its golden cupolas, and polished columns of marble, was full of the noise, music, and mighty

preparations of the feast of the Passover. It was the most memorable of all the yearly national feasts which the Jews kept. It was to commemorate the passing out from Egypt, the land of bondage. Henceforward, in the same typical sense, it was to become the most memorable feast of all mankind. In the mean time, an incident occurred which suddenly brought the little company to a sense of their position. A woman, companion of Mary and Martha, one of a band perpetually devoted to the service of Jesus, quietly drew near, and poured out a box of the most precious ointment on his lowly head. It jarred upon the disciples as out of season, and also as out of proportion to the means at their disposal,—they not having the place, nor perhaps the wherewithal to procure their Passover meal, she running to the expense of three hundred pence to waste a box of spikenard ointment on the person of Jesus. The disciples grumbled at the extravagance, and the humble devotee stood rebuked and abashed, until the gentle voice of the Master was heard to give the assurance of indescribable pathos,—"Let her alone: why do ye trouble her? She hath anointed my body for the burial." The death, then, which he saw, in all its misery, drawing so near, was to him his coronation; and the loving hand which uncon-

sciously offered a melancholy tribute to that event wrought a work whose fame has spread wheresoever the gospel of Christ has been preached. In Eastern lands, the person whose death is anticipated is treated with festive honor; and Jesus, who inwardly looked up to heaven at this critical time, felt that the loving Father had, through that humble woman, poured upon him a parting honor, a final anointment. When, therefore, they spoke of distributing its value among the poor, he feelingly exclaimed, "The poor ye have always, but me ye have not always."

Contrast once more with this melancholy tenderness the dark cruelty of the scribes and chief priests who, amid the gathering festivities and joyful preparations of the sacred city, were laying careful plans as to how they might craftily take him, and destroy him, so as to minimize the risk of a popular uproar, and induce the deluded crowd to take a share in the guilty tragedy. But Jesus foresaw all, was prepared for all, and calmly went to meet it. The disciples had gone a little before to beg the hospitality of a virtuous man who would let them eat the Passover in his house; and, in the evening, Jesus came down with the twelve to the place in the city of Jerusalem. The table was laid, the meal begun, the sad memorable supper eaten, amid silent tears

and unspeakable emotions, painted by artists, and described in the voice of faith, times without number. The hour had come, and Jesus thought it was no longer necessary to bear in his solitary soul the burden of oppressive anticipation. So, casting his eyes upon the little band, he suddenly exclaimed, "Verily, one of you shall betray me!" All the mournful warnings and exhortations uttered on the hill-slope at Bethany that morning, the sadness of the affectionate anointing, the anxiety, ominous calmness, and sorrow had sufficiently dispirited the poor disciples; and, when unexpectedly they heard that one of them should betray him to death, it startled them like a thunderbolt. Their fear, confusion, and sorrow knew no bounds. They asked questions, made surmises, and looked aghast. In the mean while, the traitor had gone out to do his work, the scene was preparing in the darkness of the night in the house of Caiaphas, and Jesus saw there was no time to lose. So he sadly went through that profound act of farewell which has symbolized the whole character of the religion he has bequeathed to us. The first three Gospels speak in very nearly the same words of a simple ceremony. He took bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you."

He took a cup of wine and gave it to them, saying, "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many. Do this in remembrance of me." The Gospel of John mentions that after the meal he laid aside his garments, took a basin and towel, and began to wash his disciples' feet. Both the statements are in strict conformity with Eastern customs, and the spirit of the occasion.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The figure of the parting Christ, as he institutes the sacrament of bread and wine, is that of a father who calls his sorrowing sons to receive the precious inheritance he has reserved for them till the last moment. The inheritance is the immortal treasure of spiritual character. The gospel accounts bear testimony to that inheritance. The bodily Jesus departs, the wealth of his spirit remains. The bodily Christ departs, the presence of his spirit remains in the bosom of God. He invests that spirit in his little band of faithful followers. He pours out his spirit into the willing receptacles of their nature, makes himself the flesh of their flesh, the blood of their blood. He embodies himself, incarnates himself, reproduces himself in his spiritual descendants. He thus acquires and imparts

immortality before he has ascended to heaven. The symbolical farewell of the bread and wine is the transmission of the character of the parting Christ to the regenerate nature of future humanity. The flesh of the flesh is a man's inner self, and the blood of his blood is his moral character.

"The difference between subjectivity and objectivity in religion," observes Keshub, "none comprehended so thoroughly as Jesus, or he would not have instituted the sacramental rite. The disciples believed in him as their Lord and Master, and they had assured him of their loyalty and devotion. Why, then, did he demand of them further allegiance? Why did he impose upon them the obligation of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, saying, 'This do in remembrance of me'? Because the prophet saw that his people would hold him up as an objective impersonation of truth and purity, and he wished to prevent it. Despite the unbounded reverence and love which they tendered to him, he felt he was only an outward object of devoted loyalty. He preferred subjective allegiance, the loyalty which, while it intellectually accepted him, absorbed him spiritually in the inner consciousness. Nothing short of internal absorption and assimilation could satisfy Jesus. And this beautiful idea he

embodied symbolically in the eucharist. He asked his disciples to eat his flesh and drink his blood. In other words, he wished to be accepted by the world subjectively, and not objectively. Let us be satisfied that every bit of flesh and every drop of blood in you and in me is Christ before we proclaim ourselves his followers. Faith in Christ means life in Christ."

The parting Christ means to confirm that at the Last Supper. In eating the bread and wine which was Christ's flesh and blood, the disciples, and all disciples, at all times, received the essential elements of his character within themselves, digested them, assimilated them, grew upon them, and gained an exalted vitality they did not possess before. What was the profoundest element of character in the parting Christ? That inner spirit in him which he meant, when he said, "I and my Father are one." The features of Christ's character, so far as one may dare to analyze, were first his faith, secondly his love, and thirdly his humble, self-forgetful, unremitting service. His faith included, in the fact of eternal sonship, the whole world in him, and the Father in all. The three, namely, the Father, himself, and all mankind, constitute together that kingdom of heaven which he came to establish. This

was the very soul and secret of his existence, the bread of his whole being, the word which came out of the mouth of God, the cause for which he came to the world. In offering the symbolical bread, the Master, before he left his servants, committed unto them the absolute secret of his life and ministry, and the future of the cause of humanity, to establish which both he and they had been preordained, and sent on earth. In accepting this bread, they accepted that impersonal existence which meant the annihilation of all individual interest and all carnal craving, and a new life in the spirit of Jesus. His love was the intense and ardent enthusiasm of union with God and man, which may be likened unto strong new wine. It was a holy intoxication that sent him from suffering to suffering, from sacrifice to sacrifice, until all was matured in the consummate glory of Calvary. In offering, then, that mystical wine as a farewell remembrance, the departing Messiah left his ardent passion of humanity to those who took up his work, to love as he loved, to suffer as he suffered, to die as he died. And, in accepting that wine, they accepted the solemn and eternal vow to perpetuate on earth the kingdom of Christ's love. The bread and wine thus symbolize the incorporation of Jesus in the flesh and blood of his

descendants,— the hiding of the Son of Man in the everlasting bosom of humanity. It was an outward farewell, but inward union,— Christ in us, we in Christ, and all in God. The holy body of Christ, which is to be found nowhere else on earth, is thus found buried in every faithful heart.

The Lord's Supper, then, was an affectionate farewell, a personal union between the living and the dead, and the foundation of an everlasting community. It was a personal bequest, a new covenant, and a tender parting. It was a sacrament, a symbol, an outward embodiment of the invisible Christ in the visible Church. The disciples and apostles were each a limb, each a vital part of that corporate Church; but Christ's flesh and blood, his spirit, his character, ran through all, enlivening, combining, idealizing the whole. There is a celestial fitness in the metaphor of the vine and its branches. The vine was sown, with its branches, in the flesh and blood of the Messiah, on the soil of the soul of the apostolic Church, and the Husbandman watered it with the dews of grace. The parting Christ perpetuated his whole life-work in the new passover meal of the Last Supper. Truly may the Christian Church be said to be washed in the blood of Jesus, and fed with the substance of his being. Visible

representation of the invisible could not be fitter, or more touching. Nor could Christ more effectually perpetuate his ministry in those who were to minister to the whole world.

Where, then, is Christ? Not in fictitious portraits, not in sculptured forms, not in mythological heavens. Christ is in the flesh and blood of every faithful believer. And what is the Christian Church? Not a farrago of false theology, or mumbling dogmatism, of routine worship, and saint worship. Christ's Church is the spiritual household, in which the brothers have that faith, love, and holiness which the sweet founder bequeathed to the world at the parting meal two thousand years ago. Verily may it be said that Christ has fled from the visible Church, which is so full of strife, contention, and mutual hatred, to that invisible Church where, sitting in the heart of the humble believer, embosomed in God, he calls you and me to the mansions of peace.

St. John narrates the washing of feet. It is a menial service in the East: we all know it in India. But it symbolizes the truest service, wherein all the enjoyment belongs to him who is served, and all the labor — labor without reward — to him that serveth. Service crowns faith and love. Workless love and faith are a mockery. Hence, Christ so repeatedly

emphasizes the *doing* of the commandment. And the typical farewell could not be complete, unless it included the washing of the disciples' feet, in all the important elements of Christ's character. Peter objected to have his feet washed. He forgot that from the moment he had been called away from his fishing-net, his feet had been every day washed by the Lord. At the last moment he only symbolized in an external ceremony his nameless occupation of washing men's feet. He taught them, by physical illustration, to do what he had done all his life. By his baptism the whole world had been bathed and cleansed ; and now, by his washing men's feet, there has been established among mankind that ministry of unutterable service which has sprung up like the lily everywhere — wherever the name of Christ has been uttered, and his holy religion has set its foot.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DYING CHRIST.

IN death, as in life, Christ was human nature perfected. If he has taught us how to live, has he not taught us even more completely how to die? Death is an awful thing. However much we may choose to explain it away, we regard death with feelings which nothing else can excite. The strangeness of the sense of a sure existence in the void unknown weighs upon the heart with a supernatural pressure. And the utmost intensity of such feelings Jesus bore as none had done before. Socrates uttered philosophic self-composure in those immortal words: — "And now it is time to depart. For me to die, for you to live. But which for greater good God only knows." Cato showed heroic courage and devotedness. Seneca illustrated indomitable stoical firmness. But Christ alone presented on the cross the perfection of human nature. The unexampled injustice of the mock trial was consummated in the cruelty of the crucifixion.

The first and the chief attribute of the victim of this national conspiracy was his characteristic silence. To the vilest and most deadly charges, he responded with deep, unbroken silence, such as excited the wonder of the judge and the spectators. To the grossest insults, the most violent ill-treatment and mockery that may well bring indignation into the feeblest heart, he responded with voiceless uncomplaining calmness. Those who are unjustly accused, and causelessly ill-treated only know what tremendous strength is necessary to keep silence to the end. Those only who have achieved the triumph of perfect self-control, and put out for ever the fire of all passion in the waters of Nirvana, those who have partaken of the peace of conscious justification in the presence of an All-seeing God, know what dignity there is in extreme silence. Silence as a virtue, as the attribute of holy saints, was known in India before; but silence, kept under such conditions, as signalized the trial and death of Christ, had never been practised in our country, or anywhere else in the world. Jesus has exalted this lamb-like virtue of silence to the heavenly crown of sweet sonship. Since then, we, too, who are so loud with our petty complaints, have learned to suffer in silence. But it was not a silence unbroken by

speech. Only it was a speech nobler than silence. Coming out of the wicked judgment hall with a simple affirmation of his spiritual royalty, he but once spoke on the road, which, in remembrance of the unheard of inhumanity exercised upon the Messiah, is to this day called the Street of Agony. And that was to the weeping daughters of Jerusalem. His life-work, always carried on under difficulties, was converted into the heaviest burden of pain which man can bear, while he walked that dark, tearful, memorable walk to the place of execution. He carried his own cross, and often stumbled under it, and fainted with its weight. Marvellously does that symbolize the trial of every man who undertakes an unique and God-appointed life-work. The men were too hard-hearted, or, if the faint pulse of pity throbbed at all in any wavering heart, it was hushed under the withering and deadening influence of that miscreant mob. But the women followed weeping aloud. Genuine womanly sorrow heeds neither fear nor control. Jesus noticed it, and addressed it, perhaps unheeded.

Even when he ascended the cross, amid the reeling, bewildering agony of the scene, he beheld his struggling, downcast disciples, and the forlorn, weeping women. That was not the time to waste

words, nor was that the time to remain speechless. A heavy responsibility weighed upon his heart. When the living and the dying are about to part, it often happens that the living remain dumb and helpless; it is the dying that adjust the relations of life. Fathers provide for sons, husbands for wives, masters for disciples. Any failure here is the failure of a final duty. The Son of Man had neither son, nor wife, neither home, nor property. But he left behind a heart-broken mother crying with the other women who had gathered from far and near, and he left behind a fond disciple whose heart was womanly in its tenderness. He remembered both, he saw both, and for the moment, forgetting everything else, did his last duty by giving the charge of his poor parent to the only one who could be like another son to her.

Then, his dying vision enlarged. Amid the shouts and mockeries, cruelties, and unspeakable wickedness of the scene, by his side he saw nailed on another cross the writhing form of a miserable malefactor, who looked upon him with the last glance of supplicating penitence and faith. The deep, divine sympathy, which during the labors of his ministry carried him incessantly to the doors of poverty, pain, and death, welled up in his heart at this last spec-

tacle of suffering. And he poured out upon the bruised spirit of that penitent thief the benign balm of his passionate, forgiving love. Oh, the sense of divine fellowship on thy cross by the side of the dying Christ! Thief as thou wert, his sympathy and promise found for thee a shorter way to paradise than we, with all our forms and creeds, find to-day. That sympathy was magical in its power of transforming; that promise, once heard, could never more be forgotten. The hour of death only intensified the power of Christ's marvellous love, and he died weeping for the thief.

It was a dread moment; and, amid the palpitations of his sad, loving spirit, the great physical pain now and then overwhelmed him. Too artless to disguise suffering or feign a mastery over bodily and mental agony, given him as his portion by the hand of God, he cried, "I thirst." The stupefying drink which they offered him he refused — that thirst was unquenchable. Could oceans of tears and carnal consolation quench the thirst he felt at that fatal hour? The physical thirst was but a faint symptom of the parching, scorching, immense desert in the soul, which cried out the next moment, "My Father, my Father, why hast *thou* forsaken me?" That was the fulness of agony.

What bodily pain is not bearable when the consolation of the Loving Presence is within the soul? And, when *that* ineffable consolation is withdrawn, physical pain is aggravated, and the cry was rung out of the soul's desolation. It was death upon death. "My Father, why hast thou forsaken me?" So cried Jesus on the cross, to give us infinite encouragement when, at the critical times of life, we, too, feel forsaken. He complained of the Father's forsaking to the Father alone. But never was he *less* forsaken than at that awful moment. The spirit of the Father was never nearer to the Son than it was *then*. Yet he was left alone with the calm majesty of his glorious trust, that our poor, sceptical solitude might be illumined by a similar faith. The Son of Man glorified his messiahship, not with a triumphant union with the Father on earth, not with a chorus of hallelujahs from the mouths of the faithful, neither with the crown of success on his radiant brow, nor with a smile of exultation on his dying lips; but amid apparent failures and undeserved shame, he died with a ringing cry of pain that darkened the triumph of his enemies into a hastening doom. In contrast to that agony is the gravity of the offence of his persecutors. The balance of divine justice, weighing the

measureless pain of the dying Christ equally with the guilt of the Jews, is an appalling sight, the thought of which drowned in his heart, even at this moment, all sense of personal injury. Suffering melted into commiseration, death melted into forgiveness; and, a suppliant for mercy on behalf of those very men who put him to death, he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Can ideal forgiveness go any further? His mother provided for, the sufferer by his side consoled, his bodily pain fully endured, his sense of desertion expressed, to give us the assurance that God is never nearer to us than when we imagine he is far away, his enemies heartily forgiven, there came the time for the dying Christ to commend his spirit into the hands of the Father. Let the Father who dwelleth in every heart, declare with what response he embraced the glorious spirit of the dying Son. The heavens were darkened, the earth shook, all nature was hushed, as spirit passed away into Spirit. The figure on the cross cried, "It is finished, and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REIGNING CHRIST.

IN losing Jesus, as they imagined they never would, the bewildered disciples lost everything. Every tie that bound them to a mad, hostile, heathen world seemed suddenly broken, every hope lost. Alive till but yesterday, with the fulness, vividness, pathos, and glory of his heavenly life around him, eating, drinking, watching, weeping before them, every scene breathing the fragrance of his gentle figure, the whole atmosphere ringing with the echo of his song and precept — *so* alive yesterday, where was the Master now? The women sobbed as they prepared the spices to embalm his body, the men sat in dumb misery before each other, stricken and helpless. Slowly, as the watches of the black dismal night passed by, his parting sentiments, one by one, recurred to their dull, downcast faculties. Jesus had indeed foretold his death, but he had also foretold his resurrection. He had, before them all, sung on the night prior to his death, on the very scene of

the Last Supper, the great national dirge which opens with words of sublime mourning; but he also sang with pealing response the words: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened and corrected me, but he hath not given me over to death. Thou art my God, and I will thank thee. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee." A quiver of unearthly confidence thrilled through the frames of those lonely men and women, as, amid their heart-broken desertion, the sudden hope shot into their minds that Jesus might rise from the grave. Repeatedly had he said this, taught it, hoped, prayed, and sung about it. To their untutored imagination, such a hope could have but one meaning; but the hope was there. They scarcely dared to breathe it to themselves; and it rose and sank in fear, rose and sank again, leaving them in dubious despair, and anxious misery. In this state of mind, before the dawn had broken on the dismal sky, the women had left — headed by that fiery spirit, Mary of Magdala — for the garden of Joseph where the body of Christ lay buried. The strange thoughts, fears, and wishes,— above all, the overpowering sorrow that worked in them in that dark, ghostly twilight, in that deserted, solitary walk,— must have made them oblivious of everything

until they reached the garden,—nay, perhaps the very brink of the grave itself. When, behold their astonishment at finding that the ponderous stone which covered the mouth of the grave had been rolled away, and the entrance to the sepulchre lay open. How, when, by whom this was done they could not imagine; but latent anticipations about the rise of the Master caused a fearful palpitation of their surcharged hearts. The simplicity and supernaturalness of their notions began to run through them in cold tremor, when, lo! in walking into the grave, they were amazed by the discovery that the body of the blessed Messiah was not there. The grave-clothes were left in the empty darkness, the napkin lay folded on the ground, everything else was as they had arranged it when they affectionately put the corpse in its last repose. But the body of the Lord had departed. Whither? Their trembling hopes, their anxious thoughts, their trusting hearts, had anticipated the answer. They stood transfigured, they had scarcely the power of speech or thought left in them. In that supernatural twilight, they saw angel apparitions. Corroborative voices seemed to reverberate their swelling faith. And they ran to inform the apostles that Christ is risen.

"Christ is risen!" What infinite, inarticulate

gospel in the three words! What faith, expectancy, consolation, and strength to those forlorn men and women, and to millions after them! The report spread like sunlight, and through the silent darkness of the centuries reaches us at the present day. Why rudely raise the veil from the face of that sweet, simple, sacred trust which soothed the bosoms of those stricken children of God in their inconsolable grief? Why expose the tender and holy confidence of millions in every age, who on their ideas of Christ's resurrection have anchored the dear hope, and trust of a glorious eternity? If Jesus has risen to them, much more hath he risen to us. "Flesh and blood," says Paul, "cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven." But doth not the spirit rise to the Spirit? Flesh and blood are not more real than the spirit. It is the incorruptible that putteth on incorruptibility. The spirit of Jesus hath risen, and reigneth.

Christ reigns. As the law of the spirit of heavenly life, he reigns in the bosom of every believer. He reigns in some as the spirit of trustful, speechless suffering, in others as the endless struggle and devotion to a life-work that seems far from completion. Christ reigns in some as the spirit of agony for others' sins. He sits as a crown of thorns on the

brow of those who have sold themselves at the altar of brotherly love. In others, he reigns as the hard-won spirit of forgiveness for injuries that have sapped the foundation of life, injuries that are given as the reward of life-long goodness and service, that bring death where life should be. As the calm spirit of trust that reposes itself in all-sufficing Providence, that labors hard to-day and thinks not of the provisions of the morrow, as consecrated poverty that is sure of its daily bread, Christ reigns in us. Christ reigns as the recognizer of divine humanity in the fallen, the low, and despicable, as the healer of the unhappy, unclean, and the sore diseased. Reigns he not in the sweet humanity that goes forth to seek and save its kin in every land and clime, to teach and preach, and raise and reclaim, to weep and watch, and give repose? Christ reigns as matchless strength in the character that scorns vileness and seduction, lust and worldliness, and the power of evil in men and women put together. He reigns as sweet patience and sober reason amid the laws and orders of the world, as the spirit of submission and loyalty he reigns in peace in the kingdoms of the world. As the secret of ceaseless prayer, as the realized result of fervid devotions, Christ holds his sway in those who pray to God in his spirit. As tender

sympathy with every weakness and unrest, every poverty, suffering, and unheeded complaint, Christ reigns in his disciples. He reigns as an approving smile in our sympathy with every good and righteous cause, and in the ready tear for unremedied and unaccountable pain. Reigns he not in every minister as the vow of service unto death,—as painstaking, self-denying anxiety for others' good, as all-surrendering labor in the household of God? Christ reigns in the individual who feebly watches his footprints in the tangled mazes of life. He reigns in the community that is bound together in his name. As divine humanity, and the Son of God, he reigns gloriously around us in the New Dispensation.